



Department  
for Education

# Special free school application form

Published: July 2017

Insert the name of your free school(s) below using BLOCK CAPITALS

**DISCOVERY SPECIAL ACADEMY**

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## The application form explained

Before completing your application, please ensure that you have read both the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) carefully. Please also ensure that you can provide all the information and documentation required.

### Sections

#### Declaration

The declaration must be made by a company member on behalf of the company/trust. The declaration section is found on page 8 of this form.

**Section A** asks you for applicant details in the Excel form.

**Section B** asks you to outline your proposed special free school(s) in the Excel form.

**Section C** asks you for detailed information on the vision for your special school(s) and is to be completed using the Word form.

**Section D** asks you for detailed information on your proposed education plan(s) and is to be completed using the Word form.

**Section E** of appropriate engagement with parents, LA's and the community

**Section F** asks you to demonstrate that you have the capacity and capability to open the school(s) you are proposing and is to be completed using the Word form.

**Section G** specifically asks about costs. This requires the completion of the relevant sections of the Excel budget template.

**Section I** is about your suitability to set up and then run a free school. The form is available [here](#).

Failure to submit all the information required may mean that we are unable to consider your application.

#### Submitting Sections A to G

The completed Word and Excel templates and the budget plans need to be submitted by email to the local authority and to the department by the application deadline to: [FreeSchool.SPECIAL@education.gov.uk](mailto:FreeSchool.SPECIAL@education.gov.uk). Your email must be no larger than 9MB in size. If your documents are larger than 9MB, please send multiple emails clearly indicating that the emails are connected (e.g. email 1 of 3).

The Word template should be between 50 and 100 pages long; formatted for printing on A4 paper; completed in Arial 12 point font; and include page numbers. Annexes are excluded from the page limit and should be restricted to CVs for key individuals. Please do not include photographs, images and logos in your application.

The contents of the budget Excel template and Excel application form are excluded from the page limit.

Please include the name of your school in the file name for all Word and Excel templates.

You also need to submit three hard copies (of Sections A-G and the budget plans) by a guaranteed method such as 'Recorded Signed For'

Post two hard copies to: Special Free Schools Team, Department for Education,  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

And one hard copy to the local authority.

You may also hand deliver if you prefer.

It is essential that the hard copies are identical to the version you email.

### **Submitting Section I**

Section I, i.e. the Personal Information form, is required for each member, director, and principal designate who has not submitted forms within the past 365 days; together with a list of those members, directors, and principals designate who have submitted Section I forms within the past 365 days. These need to be submitted by email alongside a copy of Section A (from the Excel template) to [due.diligence@education.gov.uk](mailto:due.diligence@education.gov.uk) stating the name of the school in the subject title.

### **Data protection**

Personal data is collected on the Word and Excel templates in order to consider an application to set up a free school and will not be used for other purposes. For the purposes of the Data Protection Act, the Department for Education and the local authority are the data controllers for this personal information and for ensuring that it is processed in accordance with the terms of the Act. The data controllers will hold all personal information you supply securely and will only make it available to those who need to see it as part of the free school application process. All personal information supplied in these forms will only be retained for as long as it is needed for this process.

## Application checklist

Task to complete	Yes	No
1. Have you established a company by limited guarantee?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you provided information on all of the following areas (where appropriate)?		
<b>Section A:</b> Applicant details	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section B:</b> Outline of the school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section C:</b> Education vision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section D:</b> Education plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section E:</b> Evidence of consultation and demand	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section F:</b> Capacity and capability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section G:</b> Budget planning and affordability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is the information in A4 format, using Arial 12 point font, and includes page numbers?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Have you fully completed the appropriate budget plan(s) where necessary?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you included CVs in the appendices for all relevant individuals in the template provided and in line with the requirements set out in the criteria?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Have you sent an email (of no more than 9 MB in size**), titled: <b>Free School Application - School Name: [insert]</b> with all relevant information relating to Sections A to H of your application to both the department and the local authority before the advertised deadline?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Have you sent two hard copies of the application by a guaranteed delivery method such as 'Recorded Signed for' to the department and one hard copy to the local authority?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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\*\* If your application is larger than 9MB please split the documents and send two emails.

Section I of your application	Yes	No
<p>12. Have you sent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a copy of Section A (tab 1 of the Excel template); and</li> <li>• copies of the Section I Personal Information form for each member, director, and principal designate who has not submitted one of these forms within the past 365 days; and</li> <li>• a list of those lead applicants, members, directors, and principals designate who have submitted Section I forms within the past 365 days</li> </ul> <p>by emailing scanned copies of Section I forms to <a href="mailto:due.diligence@education.gov.uk">due.diligence@education.gov.uk</a> stating the name of the school in the subject title, including a full list of members, trustees, and the principal designate (if appointed); and a copy of Section A?</p> <p>(See guidance for dates and deadlines)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Declaration

**\*\*This must be signed by a company member on behalf of the company/trust\*\***

I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I further confirm that if the application is successful the company will operate a free school in accordance with:

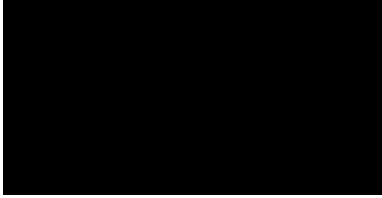
- the requirements outlined in the [application guidance](#);
- the funding agreement with the Secretary of State;
- all relevant obligations and requirements that apply to open academies (eg safeguarding, welfare and bullying) – this includes statutory requirements (those that are enshrined in legislation) and non-statutory requirements (those contained in DfE guidance); and
- for children with an education health and care plan ('EHCP') naming the school, the requirements pertaining to children with SEN within the special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice, including the duty to admit a child where the school is named in an EHCP;
- for schools where the Secretary of State agrees in the funding agreement that they can also admit pupils without an EHCP with special needs, the school must, in respect of these pupils, comply with the School Admissions Code, the School Admissions Appeals Code and the admissions law as it applies to maintained schools. 16-19 applicants do not need to follow these codes but must have admissions arrangements and criteria which are fair, objective and transparent.

I have fully disclosed all financial liabilities and the full extent of each/any debt for which the company, trust or existing school is liable.

I confirm that I am not and have never been barred from regulated activity within the meaning given by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. I further declare that all current members and directors of the company have confirmed to me that they are not and have never been so barred, and that if it comes to my attention whilst I am a member or director of the company that I or any other member or director are or have been so barred I will notify the Department for Education. I and all other members and directors of the company understand that the company's free school application may be rejected if a member or director of the company is found to have been barred from regulated activity.

I acknowledge that this application may be rejected should any information be deliberately withheld or misrepresented that is later found to be material in considering the application.

Signed



Position:



Print name:



Date: 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017

**NB: This declaration only needs to be signed in the three hard copy versions of your application. Please use black ink.**



## Completing the application form

### Section A – applicant details (use Excel spread sheet)

Please:

- complete the Section A tab in the Excel spread sheet; and
- refer to the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

### Section B – outline of the school (use Excel spread sheet)

Please:

- complete the Section B tab in the Excel spread sheet; and
- refer to the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

## Section C – vision

Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- provide one version of this section, referring to individual schools or circumstances if you are applying for more than one school;
- refer to the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

### **Section C1 – a credible proposal to deliver a high-quality special free school and a clear rationale for establishing it in this area**

#### **Key Features**

Nexus Multi Academy Trust intends to establish a 40-60 place Special Free School in response to the Expression of Interest published by Sheffield City Council (SCC). We intend to name the school “Discovery Academy” to reflect the positivity of this new provision for the children and families of Sheffield and outline our ambition for all children to discover new horizons through an excellent, personalised education.

Nexus Multi Academy Trust will work with a range of partners to ensure high quality personalised provision for pupils with statements/Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) with a diagnosis of autism spectrum condition (ASC) with related Social Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH). Some children may also have specific learning difficulties (SpLD) as an additional need but will not have significant learning difficulties.

This builds on the excellent partnerships we have developed in the sub-region, as Nexus MAT is a Trust constituted by four special schools based across Rotherham and Doncaster with mainstream primary in the process of joining the Trust. As such, we have a wealth of local knowledge; excellent and long-established working relationships with multiagency partners; and a strong commitment to the children and families of the Sheffield community.

Discovery Academy will provide for Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 with the configuration of classes co-produced with the principal local authority, SCC, to meet their specified needs.

In addition to the core school offer, there will also be the benefit of possibly offering some children and young people residential/boarded provision. In the market engagement event held for the free school, SCC officers were clear this is an element they want to discuss further with the appointed sponsor and co-produce,

## Section C1 – a credible proposal to deliver a high-quality special free school and a clear rationale for establishing it in this area

therefore we state our intent to this co-production but accept this will be need to be agreed with the LA as part of pre-opening discussions.

### Vision for Discovery Academy

We will raise attainment and aspirations for pupils at Discovery Academy and provide a more tailored, specialised offer for children and their families. Our vision is that our pupils will be:

- **Successful, happy learners who achieve accreditation and are motivated to enhance their knowledge and skills to reach their full potential.** Pupils with ASC/SEMH needs can achieve more than they ever thought possible and we will draw on our existing provision as a MAT to establish the curriculum, resources, environment, strategies and expertise to do this. This will include GCSEs and other qualifications which reflect the strengths and aspirations of pupils.
- **Responsible citizens who respect others and take part in political, economic, social and cultural life.** Pupils with ASC/SEMH needs can take an active role in society at all levels and we will work with local businesses to offer them the work placement opportunities, career guidance and work skills to do so.
- **Confident young people who make informed decisions in their best interests and communicate them based on their values and beliefs.** Pupils with ASC/SEMH needs can often manage their condition with support and should be able to develop their abilities with confidence and enjoyment.
- **Active contributors with a clear voice and capacity to influence, who can lead or work in a team.** Pupils with ASC/SEMH needs can and should contribute to their local community and we will provide them with the communication skills, social skills and career guidance to do so.

Discovery Academy will accept children with an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) assessment which determines that their needs - related to with a diagnosis of autism spectrum condition (ASC) with related Social Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH) - can best be met at the school. We will work with the local authority and families to ensure that the programmes of study made available at the school meet the needs of the pupils on role. The school will offer a personalised approach for each child where children and families are at the centre of decisions about their support, ambition and progress. There will be choice and variety so students can flourish and make significant progress. Integration with peer groups will be a significant driver for the curriculum design for each child. The National Curriculum will need to be modified in order to meet the educational needs of learners; this may

## **Section C1 – a credible proposal to deliver a high-quality special free school and a clear rationale for establishing it in this area**

mean that elements of the curriculum are taken from Programmes of Study in earlier key stages.

The Trust will establish service level agreements with local health and care providers to ensure that there is clarity over the leadership and management arrangements of the multi-disciplinary team located on site. The model will be one of co-location under shared leadership rather than unified line management, (i.e. staff will continue to be employed by their agencies such as the NHS or the LA, but based in school falling under the day-to-day leadership of the Principal) and therefore a partnership steering group/SLA review body will be convened to ensure the Multi-Disciplinary Team arrangements continue to be effective. Contributions from health and care services into the EHCP process will be essential in quantifying the input required for individual children which in turn will shape the curriculum offer for a child. Section D outlines how we will ensure that we provide a differentiated approach for pupils with greater academic aptitude than others.

The Trust will work with the Learn Sheffield to ensure that there is a systematic means of connecting into mainstream schools across the Borough. Should the final site selected for the Discovery Academy be co-located with an existing mainstream academy, then every effort will be made to ensure there is a strong partnership between the two settings, ideally through a formal appointment from the mainstream school onto the pre-opening board of Discovery Academy and continued onto the LGB.

As children and young people will be on roll from across the city (with some places expected to be from neighbouring LAs), our mainstream partners will be as broad as the home communities our children and young people come from. The school will operate outreach support and a training offer for mainstream schools from across the borough to help promote best practice and inclusion, and this will help ensure key partnerships are fostered and maintained with the school developing as a centre of excellence, linked into local the teaching school alliances. Enabling inclusion and supporting inclusive practice will be at the heart of our work with clearly defined responsibilities for every child where they access their education from more than one setting. This will be enshrined in a child's EHCP so that all agencies are clear.

Nexus MAT will oversee the creation and ongoing management of Discovery Academy. We will be building on our existing provision and the experience our academies have as operating as highly successful providers for children with ASC and SEMH. In total, Nexus has 4 academies with a combined roll of 456 pupils with age ranges of 2-19. As per our 5 year strategic plan, the Trust anticipates managing 8-12 schools by 2021 (either within South Yorkshire or no further than the surrounding boroughs of the region), through a combination of converter schools,

## **Section C1 – a credible proposal to deliver a high-quality special free school and a clear rationale for establishing it in this area**

sponsored schools and the opening of free schools. The latter will only be in response to where there is evidential local need.

Around 60% of the pupils on roll at our academies have a diagnosis of ASC, and every school has a proportion of children on roll with ASC. At our moderate learning difficulty schools, we ensure that high functioning children and young people have access to a challenge curriculum and are entered for academic qualifications relevant to their level of ability. Where necessary, we partner with mainstream schools to ensure that our children have access to learning in a mainstream setting.

Pupils will come from a variety of backgrounds, which is outlined more clearly in Section D and includes pupils eligible for Free School Meals; who are EAL; of minority backgrounds, etc. All pupils will aspire to and attain the highest levels, academically and socially. Around a quarter of our existing pupil cohort across the MAT is classified as BME or having English as an additional language, which adds to the richness and diversity of our offer. By clearly understanding the cultural needs of our children and their families, Discovery Academy will develop an extended school offer that engages all children and families in understanding the intrinsic values of democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

We plan to build on our existing capability and over 40 years of experience in SEND to establish Discovery Academy. Pupils will be able to maintain familiarity with - and benefit from the continuity of - their learning environments to reduce the risk of negative transition points and ensure parental anxieties are negated. This approach will also ensure that pupils develop and maintain friendship groups and be supported by staff who know the children and who the children know. Where appropriate and where person centred planning supports this, children will also spend time in mainstream provision ideally in their home community. Close working with SENCOs in mainstream schools and the local authority to help manage and facilitate transitions will be an essential component of how we deliver truly inclusive provision.

Whilst we propose the name of Discovery Academy, we will seek to engage with children, families, the local authority and other partners in naming our free school so that we are walking the talk of collaboration and open partnership from day 1. We will work closely with Becton School so that we can take the bets of their Kenwood provision and build our offer around their strong track record. We will also ensure that the Sheffield Schools Forum are invited to engage in the governance arrangements of the Free School through the pre-opening stage to ensure that we are connected into the wider family of Sheffield schools. [REDACTED]

**Section C1 – a credible proposal to deliver a high-quality special free school and a clear rationale for establishing it in this area**

[Redacted content]

## Section D – education plan: part 1

Nexus MAT sit alongside Sheffield City Council in sharing a specific commitment to ensuring all pupils have access to an educational setting that is appropriate to their needs. The NAS 2006 campaign ‘Make school make sense’ still resonates and holds true today with 3 essential considerations that Nexus advocate:

- the right school
- the right training
- the right approach

*(Batten et al 2006)*

The development and operation of the new special free school will reflect Sheffield’s five-year strategy to transform the lives and futures of vulnerable children and young people which sits alongside Nexus MAT’s strategic ambitions and our joint commitment to better services for pupils, young people and families

At Nexus, our experience tells us that there is a high demand for places in such a school across this area. We know that population growth coupled with changing need will place disproportionate pressure on resources (ASC/SEMH) in Sheffield, hence the new free school proposal.

Therefore as well as improving the diversity and quality of the local offer, this new school would certainly help meet a gap in the current area provision including for pupils who may be at risk of permanent exclusion.

As parents receive a diagnosis they are signposted to visit the Special Schools as well as their local Mainstream School. Where a child faces significant barriers to learning and requires a specialist provision, a Special School may be best placed to address these needs.

The figures in the table are taken from the Sheffield City Council specification/ demographic studies and are approximate.

**The table below details the number of places that the local authority proposes for each year group at the point of opening until the school is full. No. of students in first year of opening**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Year 3</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Year 4</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Year 5</b>	1	2	2	4	4	4	4
<b>Year 6</b>	2	2	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Year 7</b>	7	7	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Year 8</b>	3	7	7	5	5	5	5
<b>Year 9</b>	6	6	8	8	6	6	6
<b>Year 10</b>	3	6	6	8	8	8	8
<b>Year 11</b>	0	3	6	6	8	8	8
<b>Totals</b>	22	33	38	40	40	40	40

In addition to the places above, there would be short-term placements that would make up capacity to circa 60 FTE places. This would be a flexible model primarily aimed at supporting mainstream placements. In particular, Year 3 and Year 4 provision would be solely targeted at short-term placements. Sheffield anticipate approximately 20 FTE short-term placements and that this type of placement would last between two and three terms.

### **Grouping and transitioning**

Pupils and young people with complex needs must be supported to feel safe and secure in their environment, they need predictability and routine and staff who understand their needs and wants. For these reasons, our pupils will be placed in small class groups with a Teacher and at least 1.5 support staff who will work closely to plan, deliver and monitor the personalised timetables. Additional staff will support the work of the class teams such as Speech and Language therapist in order to maximise impact. The class teams will be part of a wider primary/secondary designation led by an identified member of senior staff.

Although the overarching set up is to operate primary and secondary sectors in the school, the main approach is to ensure 'ability led' groups. Pupils in Primary will mostly attend their class group alongside person centred learning locations. In Key Stage 3 and 4, pupils will receive teaching from specialist subject teachers, particularly within English, Maths, Science and ICT. For some students this learning will be undertaken within other settings dependent on their pathway where they have chosen for example: GCSE choices. Where support for this 'transitioning' is needed by the individual the case, the student will be prepared before this programme begins through the use of Social Stories and visual representation books (or whichever strategy they require) and they will be supported by a member of their class team or the specialist support team who knows them well. Pupils will follow their learning pathway so ultimately the teaching they receive will reflect in nature. For example, a pupil in KS4 may be involved in an internship/work placement where part of their literacy & Numeracy input is delivered in the workplace setting.

Where needed and pupil numbers dictate, year groups will be merged into classes(remaining in Key stages) in the opening years, for example Key stage 4 years 10/11 in year 1. The numbers of pupils in specific year groups will be flexible due to both the dynamics of individual pupil need/pathways and local and wider need for admissions. For example: those with PDA traits may need some one-to-one support. This will enable the young person to catch up or excel where appropriate with their studies. Depending upon their pathway they may join with other groups accompanied by an HLTA and within a context which ensures their effective transfer and tracking which would be outlined in their support plan. For some students a functional English and maths curriculum will be complemented by strategies to improve social integration. Students will be encouraged as they progress through the secondary phase to access the community to enable them to become full participants within that community during their time as students and also post-graduation as an independent and responsible adult.



Nexus MAT understand the significance of transition and how the impact of such needs to be managed especially for those in Yrs 6/7 and 11 who experience greater difficulty accessing the curriculum and maintaining relationships with their peers in mainstream schools, thus apply for special school places in greater numbers. Additionally, Year 7, also remains a standard entry point.

For example; when it comes to transition from Primary to Secondary pupils will be familiar with the environment, as the secondary phase will be on the same site as the primary phase, however, this will still require very careful management. It will be overseen by the Deputy Head. The TAs for Year 6 and 7 will rotate to ease the transition, this may happen with a Teacher where necessary. There will be visits to the secondary phase over the year. Again overseen by the Deputy along with the Class Teachers and TAs, the students will be able to begin their new phase of education secure that they will be safe and can trust that their needs will be met. The flow of staff between the phases will also aid recognition of other adults in the new environment.

Upon moving into Year 7 the pupils will be assigned, when appropriate, an existing secondary peer mentor pupil. The latter will have similar abilities, interests, and behavioural patterns in order to help the new student realise this is a place for them to continue to make progress toward their individual targets. This partnership will cover the whole of the first term and be phased out gradually as appropriate. Informal contact throughout the day will be supported. This will be supervised by the necessary staff.

Parents/carers will be involved throughout the transition process. They will be part of the end of KS2 review and invited to accompany their child on visits to the secondary phase. Being familiar with the teacher accompanying the transition, and in liaison with them, parents/carers will be asked to monitor the effects of the transition upon their child, especially detailing any concerns about the child's emotional responses. As systems, policies and practices will be consistent across Nexus MAT the pupils will notice no difference in expectations, standards and practices.

## Section D – education plan: part 2

### D1 – an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake

#### D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake

##### Curriculum Principles

At Nexus we will have the highest expectations and aspirations for the pupils and believe that they will be capable of making great progress during their time at Discovery Academy.

We are passionate about providing the best quality of education and care for all our pupils and put them at the centre of everything we do.

We are all about preparing the pupils for their next step and equipping them with the skills, knowledge and resilience needed for their adult lives. We will do this by focussing on the learning pathway, knowing their barriers to learning and addressing their needs, in essence providing the right learning for them as an individual.

Discovery Academy will make a significantly positive addition to existing local provision as it will develop a highly-specialised curriculum that will support pupils' specific needs and promote access to learning. The free school will be unique in its designation; however Nexus will work tirelessly to ensure maximum opportunities are made with local and wider providers as part of its key partnership work. Discovery Academy will not be an island; it will be an agent of learning, promoting learning beyond the school day across many environments. We believe such work to be fundamentally essential for the futures of our pupils and as such it is our strategic intent to apply our resources and energy into making this area of the curriculum achieve maximum impact on the lives of the pupils through skill building such as:

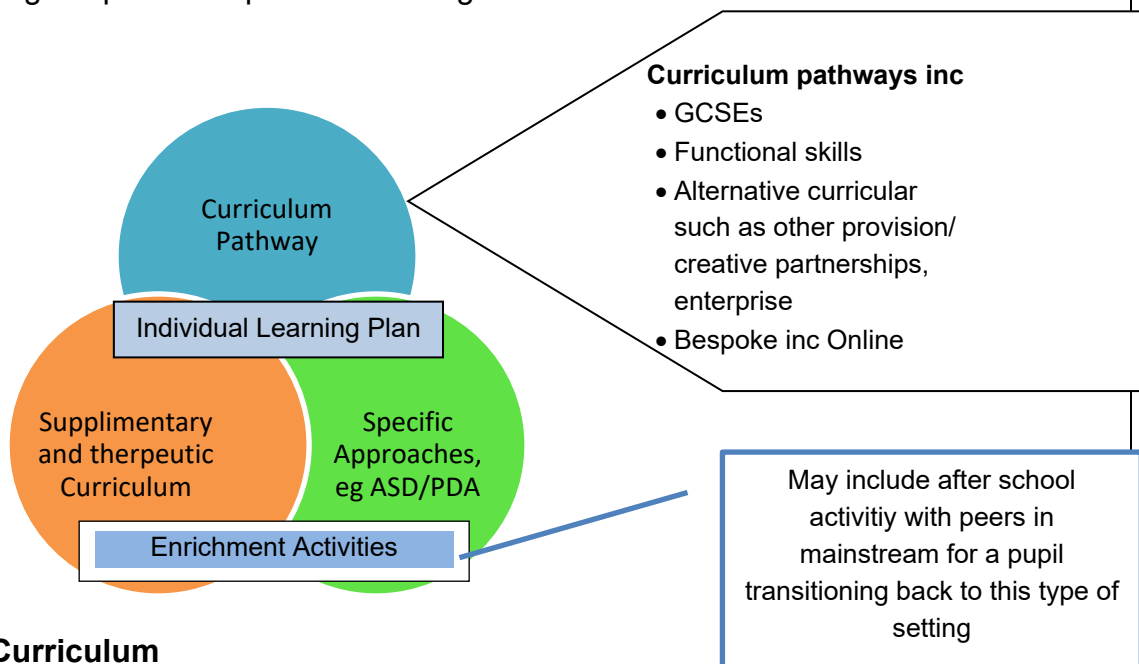
- Social skills- directly taught various social skills (recognition, comprehension and application) in one-to-one and/or small group settings. Social skills training will also be needed to generalize previously learned social skills from highly structured supportive contexts to less structured settings and real-life situations.
- Social/communication: (inc variation in receptive and expressive communication) Pupils may lack social communication skills to sustain even **minimal** social communicative interactions.
- Developing English & Maths, for example staff are trained and skilled in implementing the Sheffield City wide reading strategy ESCAL
- Physical development (including vestibular and proprioception).

**D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

- Personal thinking and learning skills (learning to be independent enquirers, creative thinkers, reflective pupils, team workers and effective participants).
- Personal, social, emotional development (including self-help, independence, hygiene, self-esteem, working with others, readiness to learn and self-regulation). We will utilise the pupil's strength areas and incorporate them into special projects/assignment.
- Sensory awareness (making sense of auditory, taste, tactile, visual, olfactory kinaesthetic and proprioceptive experiences). Asking for time to process a piece of information or task, self-coping skills, especially in new environments such as applying time out, using self-calming or accessing a resource

**Provision Planning Venn Diagram:**

Each Individual Learning Plan will include key elements which may need different weightings dependent upon the learning needs of each individual:



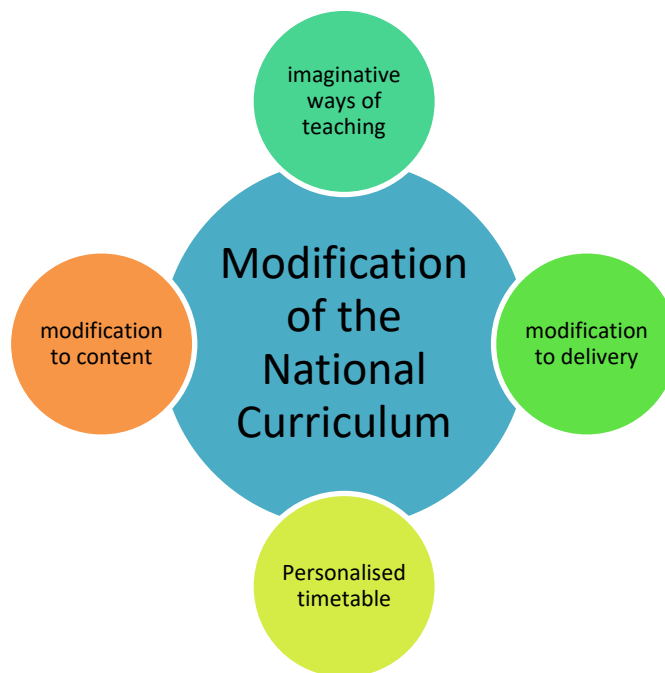
**Core Curriculum**

Where identified as appropriate for the individual, the benefits of adopting the National Curriculum at Discovery Academy are that it is a suitably-structured programme of learning that promotes good continuity through the framework allowing pupils to build and consolidate skills and knowledge as they progress. The National Curriculum provides flexibility to draw content from earlier key stages. It is widely used by all schools, meaning that pupils who join us from other schools are likely to have covered similar curriculum content.

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

Moderation of judgements and assessment will be possible with other schools using the same framework. It also provides a common language and framework across all schools.

However, how the Curriculum looks for each pupil will need to be modified by Discovery Academy in order to meet the educational needs of individual pupils; this may mean that elements of the National curriculum are supported by other more bespoke aspects such as vocational courses and alternative studies. Teaching staff will modify the offer for each child through joint assessment and pathway planning. Discovery Academy will ensure creativity and innovative practice in their approach and provide activities which capture the interests of their pupils. Nexus MAT have significant experience of such bespoke programmes, as evidenced in the case study descriptors that follow.



### **STEAM not STEM**

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) is a well-established area and focus for education, but isn't enough for those attending Discovery Academy. To inspire pupils we need to inject creativity via the ARTS - all of them from drawing and music to dance and thinking (hence STEAM). The Arts will allow the development of creativity and expression, vitally linked to functionality such as 'design'. This can make learning both meaningful and tangible, which for pupils with ASC can be a motivational factor to engage.

**D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

For some pupils with ASC and complex needs in Discovery Academy, this approach can support many of the strengths associated with their diagnosis. If carefully tailored to their individual needs it then becomes powerful and motivating education.

STEAM is a contextual approach where subjects are coordinated and linked to support each other, very much cross curricular and well matched to thematic approaches that will feature. We understand that to all pupils learning has to make sense, for those with complex needs/high functioning autism, such meaningful experiences are a must, and therefore Discovery Academy will incorporate this approach in partnership with Sheffield. Teachers working within the above areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths will plan schemes of work collaboratively to ensure a team based educational offer where learning across the subject areas joins up and may contribute to such things as enterprise, production or even later employment/work. The programmes will be carefully linked to the national curriculum expectations/standards and associated targets devised to ensure coverage. Discovery Academy will identify key staff to be trained in and lead the STEAM programme and how it interfaces with the wider school and Trust curriculum offer.

**Primary Education Key Stage 2 (inc short stay)**

	<b>Subject/other activity</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Mandatory/ Voluntary</b>	<b>Comments</b>
National Curriculum	English	5 hours	M	
	Mathematics	4 hours	M	
	Science	1½ hours	M	
	ICT	2 hours	M	Also embedded to maximise learning opps across the curriculum
	D&T/Food tech	1½ hours	M	In the Primary Phase these subjects will be taught through a thematic approach
	History/Geography	1 hour	M	
	Art & Design	1 ½hours	M	
	Music/Drama	1-2 hours	M	
	PE / physical	3 hours	M	Inc: swimming/cycling
	Modern foreign Language	30 minutes	M	through theme days
	PSHE/Citizenship/community links	3 hours	M	Taught throughout the curriculum/personalised

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	RE	1 hour	M	
Therapeutic inputs		Dependent upon personalised pathway and needs. Eg Trauma, attachment & Resilience		
Supplementary Curriculum	SMSC	Embedded and taught throughout the curriculum.		
	Life skills / functional skills	Embedded and taught throughout the curriculum.		
	Student council		V	
	Independence	Taught throughout the curriculum		
	Travel training		M	Taught through linking other subjects to visits.
Enrichment Activity	Musical tuition/singing		V	
	Clubs eg ICT/Gaming/catch up		V	
	Sports and leisure		V	
	TOTAL	25+		

**Key Stage 2**

The Curriculum within Key Stages 2 is designed to create interest which leads to wider engagement within learning; Nexus strongly believes that an interest led curriculum will promote engagement and understanding, promoting self-directed application of transferrable skills. Themes are applied and a long term overview ensures there is a broad and balanced curriculum, based upon the national recommendations for all pupils within Key Stage 2. Learning outcomes are determined following robust assessment of learning identified within pupils personalised learning plans using assessments systems which are well-embedded across the school.

We know that transitioning can be a key challenge for all pupils but for some this is a real obstacle. We will such avoid negative experiences by supporting the pupil with movement/transition and changes that are necessary when progressing through school. In wider transition, such as moving from primary to secondary or Discovery Academy short stay years 3/4 thus; from Discovery Academy back to mainstream, we will also ensure fundamental planning takes place to make this as positive and successful as possible. An example may include a year 4 pupil with a pathway back to mainstream actually spending significant time and/or stepped involvement in the mainstream school setting and having access to video/visual references they can look at over time in preparation for the move.

Class teams are expected to know and understand how each child learns best within their class through sharing information and careful analysis of observations. It is

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expected that a range of teaching strategies will be employed within each lesson to address the learning styles of each pupil. Reading, writing and number are priority aspects of the curriculum.

English lessons contain a balance of reading and writing activity at a level appropriate to each child. Mathematic lessons place an emphasis upon the acquisition of number knowledge, skills and understanding. The knowledge, skills and understanding acquired during English and Mathematic lessons is also applied during the Thematic Work.

Coverage will be monitored by Key Stage Leaders through the Learning Journey documents. Progression will be mapped by the Team through the Learning Journeys. Achievement and standards will then be further monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

**Key Stage 3**

	<b>Subject/other activity</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Mandatory/ Voluntary</b>	<b>Comments</b>
National Curriculum	English	5 hours	M	Ability streamed groups. Also embedded functionally where possible
	Mathematics	4 hours	M	
	Science	2 hour	M	
	ICT	1 hour	M	
	D&T / Art and Design	1 hour	M	On a half termly carousel
	History / Geography	1 hour	M	On a half termly carousel
	Modern Languages	30 mins	M	Subject specific, French/ German
	PSHE and Citizenship	1 hour	M	
	Music/Drama	1 hour	M	
	PE	3 hours	M	1 activity community based can inc swim/cycling
	RE	1 hour	M	
	SRE	1 hour	M	Gender groups / individual

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	therapeutic inputs	Dependent upon personalised pathway and needs.		
Supplementary Curriculum	Life skills / independence	Embedded and taught throughout the curriculum.		3hrs+ across
	Functional skills	Embedded and taught throughout the curriculum.		
	Social skills / interaction / PSD	Embedded and taught throughout the curriculum.		
	Tutorials/catch up	30 mins	M	
	Outdoor classroom, conservation, Environment eg Recycling,		M	Taught through linking other subjects to visits.
	Student council		V	
	Travel training		M	Taught through linking other subjects to visits.
	Community visits/ trips		M	
Enrichment Activity	Musical tuition/singing		V	
	Clubs student council led eg ICT/Gaming		V	
	Sports, leisure & Media		V	
	Community links – theatre, cinema, leisure, charitable events		V	
	Animal care		V	
	Horticulture		V	
	Duke of Edinburgh (DofE)		V	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24-25+ hours</b>		

At Key Stage 3 the curriculum will develop subject specific knowledge, skills and understanding through the Curriculum Programmes of Study and Age Related Expectations. In addition, more emphasis will be placed upon the functional application of these skills. It is expected that students will be provided with a wealth



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of opportunities to develop their skills within the community through planned activities.

Example: A small group of 3 pupils apply critical thinking in order to solve a problem and assign responsibilities such as : 'Preparing a tuck shop for break' Pupils delegate responsibilities, create a shopping list online (IT), prepare resources such as set up and budgeting(Numeracy & problem solving), access the community(Travel Training) and deliver the service to others(PSD/other). They would review the project and reinforce/embed the learning with the Teacher.

**Key Stage 4 pupils will choose a package of qualifications/ accreditations (in line with their pathway), selecting from either of the categories (GCSEs or Entry Levels), as appropriate. All pupils will have to include an English and Maths course.**

	<b>Subject/other activity</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Mandatory/ Voluntary</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Core curriculum Accreditation (such as ASCAN) will supplement GCSEs/EL. Students following courses delivered in partnership with other providers are supported by Nexus staff and will have a bespoke timetable.	English	4 hours	M	
	Mathematics	4 hours	M	
	Science	1 hour	M	
	ICT/media	1 hour	M	Also embedded to maximise learning opps across the curriculum
	PSHE	1 hours	M	
	Thematic work (incorporating Expressive Arts, MFL, Geography, History, Music and ICT, technologies)	2 hours	M	These subjects may be chosen as an option for qualification within 'Alternative' pathway programmes.
	Work Related Learning - Work Skills, CV building, Horticulture, Catering, Hair and Beauty and DIY	2 hour	M	On the school site or at a local Vocational Centre.

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	Travel training		M	Taught through linking other subjects to visits.
	Fitness and Leisure,	3 hours	M	
	Enterprise, Careers and Work Experience	2 hour	M	Work experience in a 'block' through internal or external placement.
	Citizenship	1 hour	M	
	RE	1 hour	M	
	therapeutic inputs	Dependent upon personalised programme and needs.		
Supplementary Curriculum	Tutorial	1 hour	M	
	Life skills / functional skills	2 hours	M	
	Social skills / interaction		M	Taught throughout the curriculum
	Communication / SALT			Dependent on need
	Student council		V	
	Independence		M	
	Community visits/ trips		M	
	Work related ICT/computer science		V	
Enrichment Activity	Musical instrument tuition/singing		V	
	Clubs (Student council directed)		V	
	Sports, leisure & Media		V	
	Community links – theatre, cinema,		V	
	Duke of Edinburgh		V	
	Conservation			

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	TOTAL	25+ hours		
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### Key stage 4

The Key Stage 4 curriculum focuses on developing Key Skills in ways that develop our pupils as independent, active and valued citizens within our school. The curriculum includes English, Maths, RE, PE, PSHE, Citizenship, Work Related Learning, Life skills and thematic work (incorporating Expressive Arts, Science, Geography, History, Music and ICT). Work Related Learning (Fitness and Leisure, Enterprise, Careers and Work Experience) also feature within the curriculum. The cross-curricular Key Skills are developed across all these subjects and areas of learning. These are Communication and Interaction, Numeracy and Problem Solving, IT, Working with Others and Improving own Learning and Performance. A number of accreditation bodies are used to accredit pupils' learning and achievements at Key Stage 4.

### Curriculum Overview

The curriculum at Discovery Academy will address the barriers to learning experienced by the pupils on roll through an **integrated, needs led approach including recognition of and support for their mental health needs**. We will create a new history of success in the minds of the pupils through development of positive healing experiences that build self-esteem and create a thirst for more learning. This may take many forms and involve key professionals from the team around the child such as CAHMS and Psychologists. Discovery Academy will ensure its partnership work has maximum impact on the life of the child through careful planning and intervention such as CBT, counselling and even art therapy. Any work with the child will of course be fully agreed and planning collaboratively to ensure needs and best interests are fulfilled

Nexus will work in partnership with Sheffield schools, colleges and its City Council to develop its curriculum, including through 'Learn Sheffield'; *a school-led system to deliver improvement through partnerships, and improve outcomes for the children and young people of Sheffield*. We will seek involvement with the area's 'School Improvement Strategy' through contribution to the development of the Sheffield priorities (6 themes), such as: **the Workforce theme**: We will help to build the 'Education & Skills' in the area, for example; supporting the inclusion and implementation of the STEAM strategy and building meaningful work placements through relevant skill building and training of pupils/young people. As part of this we will look to have representation on any 'schools partnership group' responsible for developing this aspect of curriculum development. Our curriculum design inspires pupils to learn, make progress and prepares them for their next stage; it secures breadth, depth, balance and relevance in its content.

The ultimate impact of our curriculum is on pupil's outcomes which includes progress of the 'whole child' and not just academic. To achieve this, NEXUS will work collaboratively with multi-agency professionals and parents to ensure any barriers to learning are addressed and pupils' access to learning is supported. For example

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through SLA agreements, proportionate Occupational Therapists time on site paid through personal budgets and health funding to support a pupil's kinesthetic learning style.

Nexus schools achieve this through structured and flexible assessment opportunities across core areas, including Creative and expressive Arts, Work Related Learning, Personal and Social awareness, e-safety and wider ICT – computing and communication being a vital part of the curriculum in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as highlighted by the Education Minister who said the ability to use ICT confidently from a young age is an essential core skill.

*“The ability of pupils to confidently use ICT from a young age is an essential core skill and in this day and age it is as important as being able to confidently read and write. Digital technology has a central role to play in pupils’ education and impacts upon virtually all areas of learning in the curriculum, making ICT a cross-curricular skill”.*

(Dowd J’O: Inspire 2015 conference)

Nexus will deliver a curriculum model which supports personalised pathways, addresses individualised learning needs, intrinsically linked to the pupil's spikey profiles; the curriculum is tailored to the identified pathway which promotes meaningful engagement for the pupil within the teaching and learning process. This ultimately has a positive impact on their self-esteem, mental health and well-being. The school will use the agreed outcomes of the EHC Plans to inform pupil provision.

### **Personalised Learning Pathways**

Pupils at Discovery Academy will have overlapping ASC and SEMH difficulties. Some pupils may also have specific learning difficulties (SPLD) as an additional need. Our curriculum is therefore designed on the recognition of such cohorts and their fundamental learning needs (resulting in their spiky profile); At Nexus we work with the pupil and the team around them to identify their **Personalised Learning Pathway** to access the curriculum: based upon a clear ‘learning journey’ rationale which determines pupil aspirations, relevance of destination, possibilities and positives and planning for the ‘How’; each part of the plan will be underpinned by robust assessment systems which identify pupil progress over time regardless of route taken.

Personalised learning is at the heart of this provision. Identified bespoke targets (which include IEP's) and therapy/clinical plans are infused into all aspects of provision as appropriate to the needs of the pupils. This multidisciplinary input will facilitate the school in measuring/demonstrating whole pupil progress over time.

### **Personalisation**

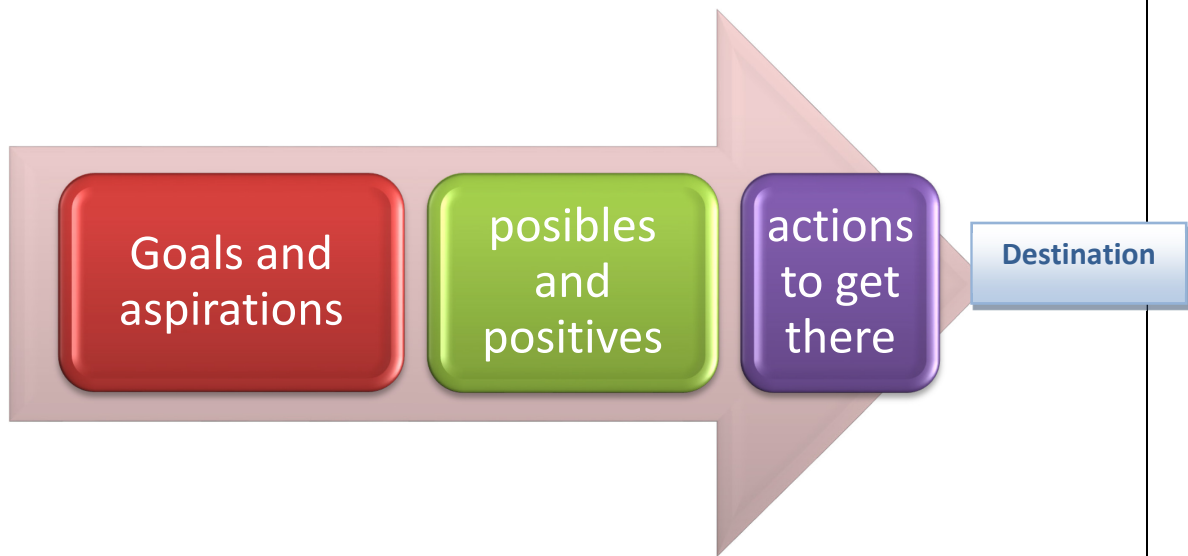
A rich and varied curriculum is offered to all pupils. The whole curriculum includes National Curriculum programmes of study modified to meet individual needs, as well

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as therapies and planned multi-sensory experiences. Communication and personal, social and emotional development are core areas of the school's curriculum.

It is essential when designing the curriculum that a full range of needs be considered and addressed. The curriculum will be delivered flexibly with consideration of each pupil's learning profile. Teachers will be required to modify curriculum objectives, learning outcomes, activities, resources and assessment criteria to match pupils' individual abilities and needs, learning styles and developmental stages.

This will all be all encompassed in the pupils learning pathway



Each pupil will have an identified pathway & timetable which will be personalised to their needs. In practical terms this means that although they will follow the outline of the school day and take part in the lessons as a class group, the way they access the learning and the content of what they are learning may be different. For example, they may access a learning experience/lesson via one of our partnership provision agreements. Pupils may also require different interventions at various points during the day which are specific to their individual needs. These will take place within an appropriate environment in line with the nature of the intervention, for example it could be dicreety in the classroom but for some activities such as specific assessment or 1:1 they may need to be withdrawn. This will be managed on a referral basis and supported by identified staff.

**Additional support for 'Access to Learning' across the school**

The school will work closely with multi-agency teams and the TAC (Team Around the Child) including SEN, CAHMS, MASH, Family Hubs, Clinical and social services to support learning and apply the necessary interventions where identified; following professional advice and guidance (e.g. – implementation of therapy plans). In this

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way the class team can better support outcomes identified and assess progress against them in an informed way, involving all relevant people in the 'team around the child'. The school will work hard to ensure pupils with multiple needs access and benefit from the curriculum and have their individual needs met throughout the school day via their personal learning plans. This ensures the school offers an equality of opportunity across the school.

### **Teaching the Curriculum**

At NEXUS MAT, *'Our pupils and their families are at the centre of what we do'* therefore it is our responsibility to go beyond in finding a means of access to the curriculum for all pupils, *empowering them to learn and achieve; be valued within our and their communities as visible, resilient, active and responsible citizens..*

### **Specific Approaches**

Discovery Academy does not subscribe to the use of one or two specific approach to teaching as we accept that all our pupils are very different and what works for one young person will not necessarily work for another.

This could be perceived as a more difficult path to follow as this requires ensuring all of our staff are conversant with a wide range of teaching approaches and are able to match appropriately approaches to individual pupils. We are however committed to this approach from an ethical standpoint and our belief that pupils are individuals who require personalised approaches.

Some of the approaches which staff will utilise include:

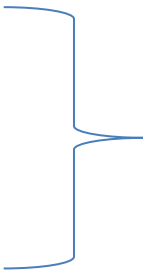
- Social stories
- Intensive Interaction
- STEAM
- Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Pupils (TEACCH),
- PDA
- Person centred Planning
- Visual timetables/schedules,
- Technology including iPad- inc Video Modelling
- Boxall profile
- Multi-sensory approaches
- Makaton
- Sensory stories
- Rebound therapy.

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### **Supplementary Curriculum**

Supplementary curriculum refers to the therapeutic and additional provision that a pupil will need to enable them to be ready to learn or to access learning. Such personal priority needs are highlighted within each pupil's EHCP and will be a central feature of their ILP, for example this may include some of the following interventions;

- social and interaction groups,
- self-regulation,
- Sensory diets
- independence,
- life skills,
- Personal Care,
- Speech and Language therapy.
- Occupational Therapy,
- CAMHS input
- Counselling
- Physiotherapy
- Rebound Therapy



A selection of members from the **Specialist Support Team (SST)**

Progress within these areas is measured through engagement, involvement and maintenance or improvements in health and wellbeing.

### **Specialist Support Team (SST)**

A Multidisciplinary **Specialist Support Team** of professionals (**SST members listed above-funded through SLA agreements**) all of whom will be highly skilled and experienced autism specialist clinicians will provide direct support to individuals and work with staff teams to ensure we consistently provide each person with holistic person-centred support. These professionals will support the work of the class teacher. Though the majority of these staff are not directly employed by NEXUS we see them as an integral part of our team.

### ***Learning/teaching Styles and Methodology***

All pupils at Discovery Academy will have their preferred style of learning. We each have preferences for particular ways of receiving information that helps us best process it. Many pupils attending Discovery Academy are more likely to rely on only one style of learning. A process of observation will be used to determine their primary style of learning. For example, if a pupil with high functioning Autism enjoys looking at books (e.g., picture books), watching television (with or without sound), and tends to look carefully at people and things then they may be a visual learner. If a pupil is

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constantly taking things apart, opening and closing drawers, and pushing buttons, this may indicate that the student is a kinaesthetic or 'hands-on' learner. Our chosen methodologies will reflect these different ways through which learning takes place.

Generally, *but with clear collaborative assessment*, Discovery Academy will adopt an approach that is conceptually grounded in best practice, incorporates evidence based focussed intervention practices and is designed and implemented to meet the challenging needs

At Discovery Academy, we will promote a caring and stimulating learning environment that gives positive encouragement to all, one which recognises and values the contributions of all members equally; this will be demonstrated throughout the school within all classes regardless of cohort of need/age of pupil.

The aims of our curriculum offer are underpinned by reference to a set of 5 performance indicators and principles; these principles help ensure our teaching is of the highest quality and that curriculum motivates and inspires all pupils to learn which encourages all pupils to be active participants in their learning:

1. All pupils are making at least expected progress
2. More pupils are making above expected progress year on year
3. 100% of teaching is assessed as being at least Good
4. Pupil attendance is in line with the national average or higher
5. All pupils achieve a positive post school transition.

*Please see section D2 for further detail on these indicators*

These 5 principles sit alongside aspects of Sheffield's own Key priorities and associated actions seen as:

- Pupils have access to the right services at the earliest opportunity  
*Discovery Academy will work collaboratively and in partnership with Sheffield throughout the process of assessment and admission planning to establish a clear and needs led team around the child. This may include being part of assessment panels and EHC plan reviews in previous schools*
- Pupils and young people are healthy, have a sense of wellbeing and are resilient  
*This will be a key focus on pupil IEPs and planning will centre on securing the right resources needed to maximise the health & wellbeing of pupils at the school*
- All pupils attend a good or better school and aspirations are raised to ensure they reach their full potential  
*As a whole school KPI, this standard will span all aspects including for example the quality of Teaching & Learning*



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- Young people are equipped to access education, employment or training in a way that supports future social mobility.

*Discovery Academy will best prepare the pupil for their next steps whether this be further education or work. We will establish clear pathways for each so that specific learning can be made in the necessary areas of development*

- Improved partnership work bringing together the areas strong resources in order to maximise impact on pupil outcomes and for the development of education and skills in the area

*Discovery Academy and the wider Nexus MAT will be an agent of partnership, immersing itself in local and wider partnership work providing a rich and varied acquisition of skill development opportunities for pupils*

- Sheffield Inclusion strategy; ensuring consistency in provision for children and young people with SEND.

*Discovery Academy will actively participate in workforce Training through Sheffield inclusion taskforce - enabling and empowering our school workforce to deliver high quality inclusive provision.*

### **Access and delivery**

The Curriculum will be delivered via the class timetable. Timetables will depict National Curriculum and other curricular areas and where supplementary 'activity' and interventions are being addressed; individual pupil timetables will depict reference to/impact on EHC Plan outcomes and where Personal Learning targets are being addressed; this will secure equality and differentiation in our provision ensuring all pupils access the National Curriculum and focus of personalised learning.

It is our Strategic Objective to increase the quality of provision for all our schools. Discovery Academy will strive for excellence in all its teaching, at all times to promote/secure our curriculum aims by:

- All staff asking what impact their decision will have on the pupil (Every decision, every day)
- *Following the Plan, Do, Review cycle to improve/ensure:*
- The quality of learning that pupil's experience
- The quality of teaching provided
- The richness of the learning environment
- We consistently have high expectations of pupils
- We use a variety of appropriate teaching and learning methods
- A delivery of teaching which build upon pupils' previous experiences, providing planned opportunities for progression and continuity, which extends pupils skills, knowledge and understanding of transferring these skills
- We provide a wide range of learning experiences for pupils in each key stage suitable for their age
- We provide work which meets pupils' needs and interests/aspirations
- We Involve the pupil in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular feedback through assessment, negotiating targets and encouraging pupils to evaluate their own achievements

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- By developing/further developing pupils' skills to become independent pupils
- By encouraging, rewarding and valuing all achievement, both formally and informally
- We work in partnership with other staff, parents/carers and the wider community to achieve
- We keep parents/carers fully informed about the progress and achievements of their child

### **Outdoor Learning**

Outdoor learning will also be a key feature of the curriculum at Discovery Academy as this offers many advantages to all pupils, particularly those that find classroom learning a challenge. This learning calls upon a great many skills and is certainly 'real' in the eyes of the pupils taking part. \*Research suggests that both pupils and teachers were happier with this learning and that pupils were more engaged in the activities.

*\*(Natural Connections- Demonstration report (a 4 year study into outdoor learning) 2016)*

The school will deliver this part of the curriculum both on and offsite at identified learning locations that facilitate the subject matter as well as cross curriculum themes. This will be key partnership work and provide opportunities for positive contributions to community projects and enterprises. The very nature of this type of learning has proven mental health benefits and is therefore very relevant to the needs of the pupils identified for Discovery Academy ;

*'There is a growing body of evidence which tends to demonstrate a positive association between a) population level exposure to natural environments and b) individual use of natural environments, and a variety of positive mental health outcomes'*

Natural England Access to Evidence Information Note EIN018 Links between natural environments and mental health: evidence briefing 2016

Outdoor learning may include a number of learning experiences in a range of learning environments. All of these will be carefully planned, implemented and evaluated in the same way as all lesson would be by Teacher/Tutors with the specialist skills, knowledge and training to deliver quality programmes of study. An example would include a Teacher with Forest School practitioner level status providing sessional input. Outdoor learning will use the same range of methodologies for assessment and evidence collection applying the most practical and effective tools for the activity. An example for Discovery Academy will include the use of mobile technology to capture evidence of learning and on-going live assessment.

### **Partnership & Collaboration**

At Nexus we believe in connecting better with others and acknowledge the importance of working alongside the area schools, parents and other professionals,

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in defining and planning the curriculum and sharing and using data effectively; such specialists and support services will have an important role in specialised assessment leading to the identification of specific needs/bespoke target setting for our pupils (inc preferred curricular and personalised pathway). Collaborative planning will encourage all aspects of the Curriculum and access to this to be taken into account. Nexus support Sheffield's key recommendation for more formalised partnership working arrangements and see this as playing a vital part in the success of the school in meeting the needs of its pupils.

At Nexus we believe in and support Sheffield Council's strategic intent to improve information sharing and communication pathways as this has a direct value and impact on the young person. We will work with Sheffield City Council/schools as part of their formal partnership plans to establish a confidential and secure communications system portal/gateway to share pupil data/progress beyond the statutory expectation and into innovative practices. Nexus MAT currently use the SIMS MIS which is a secure, web-based solution that automatically brings key SIMS data to the centre of your academy group. Ready-to-use dashboards combine SIMS key performance measures and useful pupil demographic filters to provide a consolidated view of school performance, helping you deliver improved outcomes for young people.

However, we recognise the systems we use should also be developed in collaboration and agreement with Sheffield in order to maximise the ultimate impact on the young person.

Discovery Academy will work with Sheffield partners to address the key priorities in the area, for example; clearer identification of needs through integrated assessment, facilitated by Discovery Academy inclusion on the LA SEND Panel. This will enable early conversations around needs and potential placements. Discovery Academy will also ensure they receive formal consultation prior to the LA making a decision on any placement.

We know that our pupils will have the best chance of success when school and families work closely together. We will work hard to build a strong and trusting partnership with our parents and carers which will begin at the pre-admission stage through a supportive and thorough process. Parents and carers will be welcomed into school and will be involved in the planning and review of all aspects of their child's care and education. At the pre-admission meeting we will ascertain how the parent prefers information to be presented in line with their needs. This will be entered onto the portal and contained within the Pastoral Support Plan. The school will make every effort to ensure that communication with parents meets their needs and if required the SLT member responsible for parent liaison will arrange meetings in the family home or via telephone (Facetime). A Home / School Agreement will be shared

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with parents during the Admissions visit which will identify the expectations of the school, the pupils and families within the education of their child.

Discovery Academy will apply wider collaboration and on-going planning for effective sharing initiatives through its involvement in a number of the city's initiatives inc:

*Developing Formal partnership working to ensure*

- Parental confidence in the education, health and care system
- Families are better supported to enable their children to succeed

And direct involvement in

- Learn Sheffield
- Data Sharing Agreement
- Information Advice and Guidance
- Education Improvement
- Teaching School Alliance
- Special schools Group work
- Authority wide Curriculum Tracking
- 

Discovery Academy : *sharing pupil information*



**A Team Around the Child approach**

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We believe that for a child to thrive, it is vital that education and skills address the holistic needs of the child. Nexus will enable this to happen successfully with support from a robust, multi-professional team who possess the ability to not only support but also unlock the potential of pupils, something that is of both paramount importance to Nexus as an established MAT but also a model of working of which we already have significant experience. Teachers and staff at Discovery Academy, along with the council's clinical professionals, i.e. Speech and Language department/Occupational Therapy, Psychology and Psychiatry will work collaboratively – bringing the disciplines together in new and innovative ways. In Discovery Academy there will be a need for bespoke therapies in providing a meaningful educational offer to the cohort of young people. The school will operate with SLA's for these local services through commissioning arrangements. Ultimately the pupils will benefit from a multi-disciplinary co-located team drawn from practitioners across education, health and social care teams with expertise in meeting the needs of pupils with communication and interaction and associated needs.

Close links with parents and carers will be encouraged and maintained and outreach work provided in line with identified needs. The intention is to offer a resource base and training opportunities for the range of stakeholders, including parents but also local, mainstream schools. This will contribute to the development of skills and understanding across the wider borough with the aim of improving practice across the borough.

This will certainly provide a more seamless transitioning experience for young people if staff are skilled in providing a consistent approach across providers, for example: Staff following a support plan(Communication & Behaviour) for a pupil with PDA who is transferring from Discovery Academy short stay back to mainstream.

### **Information Advice and Guidance**

Discovery Academy will work with partners to strengthen the access to high quality careers information, advice and guidance. It is important to ensure a broad range of opportunities in order to address individual needs. Nexus will bring together key strengths and address local challenges through pathways and information sharing.

We will use technologically advanced methodologies/resources to support this and use the boroughs best resources to gain maximum impact on outcomes.

### **Life Skills**

The Life Skills programme across the curriculum key stages will be developed collaboratively by the multi-disciplinary team to help pupils relate the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the curriculum to their everyday lives. The curriculum will focus on various settings, including school, home, the community then later

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preparation for 16+/college and work, and develop skills required for each of these through role play and community visits wherever possible. To support and develop pupils' life skills at key stages 4 pupils can work towards ASCAN Awards where appropriate.

To provide students with the maximum life opportunity and prepare them best for this step, we will abide by the following principles which are consistent with the vision for:

- 1. To recognise that every child is an individual with individual needs and learning styles.** We recognise that pupils and young people with complex needs inc Autism and SEMH needs will have unique abilities and ways of learning. For example they may need more visual support to understand and retain information for later use. Therefore as one example; Discovery Academy will embed clear training in the area of Social stories for staff so they can better support the pupils understanding in lessons. We will draw upon the existing skills and expertise in the established MAT to do this alongside partnership work with the relevant Speech and Language team.
- 2. To provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that meets the needs of our pupils.** We accept that unlike many of their mainstream peers our pupils experience certain difficulties with such things as social connections, Demand avoidance, theory of mind and processing. They may not always make the links between different learning experiences. Our curriculum will offer learning opportunities that make clear functional links to daily life and opportunities for meaningful social interaction.
- 3. To ensure that each pupil is able to achieve his or her fullest potential through planning, recording, assessing and monitoring in a systematic way.** The requirements of each individual pupil are determined through careful observation and assessment, discussion with parents and with other agencies, particularly school based health professionals.
- 4. To develop the skills and strategies to be valued, visible and fully included in our community and in the communities where they live.** We want our pupils to be active and responsible citizens and go on to make a positive contribution to society and the community around them.
- 5. Pupils to be prepared for an independent life with effective social skills and good emotional well-being.** Pupils' 'mental health, personal and emotional development will be a primary concern and a key area of focus.

### **Preparation for Life**

Alongside academic achievement, the school will place great emphasis on pupils' personal and social development. Opportunities to develop functional language and

### **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

social communication skills will be offered through targeted off timetable weeks, projects and clubs. Adults will share lunchtimes with pupils, encouraging social interaction and working informally on pupils' communication skills. Lunchtimes will also be an opportunity for pupils of different ages to come together and participate in organised games and sports, helping pupils learn how to work with others and be respectful members of a community. The social environment will be entirely safe and appropriate for these pupils, helping them to grow in confidence when communicating with peers. Good relationships between pupils across the year groups will be nurtured with whole school projects, developing a sense of community and belonging.

Teachers will be expected to help pupils to recognise their strengths and abilities and take the time to record and celebrate pupils' achievements. The school's behaviour policy will be clear and consistently implemented and will deal with all situations positively. Well-defined systems will be established to reward achievement, good behaviour and effort. The enrichment programme will be integrated into a slightly longer school day, enabling pupils to spend vital time with their peers in a caring and supportive informal setting, encouraging independence, friendship and inclusion. At key stages 2 and 3 a range of suitable activities will be offered, reflecting the preferences of the pupils, then as pupils reach key stage 4 more of this time will be used for extending learning opportunities and even homework.

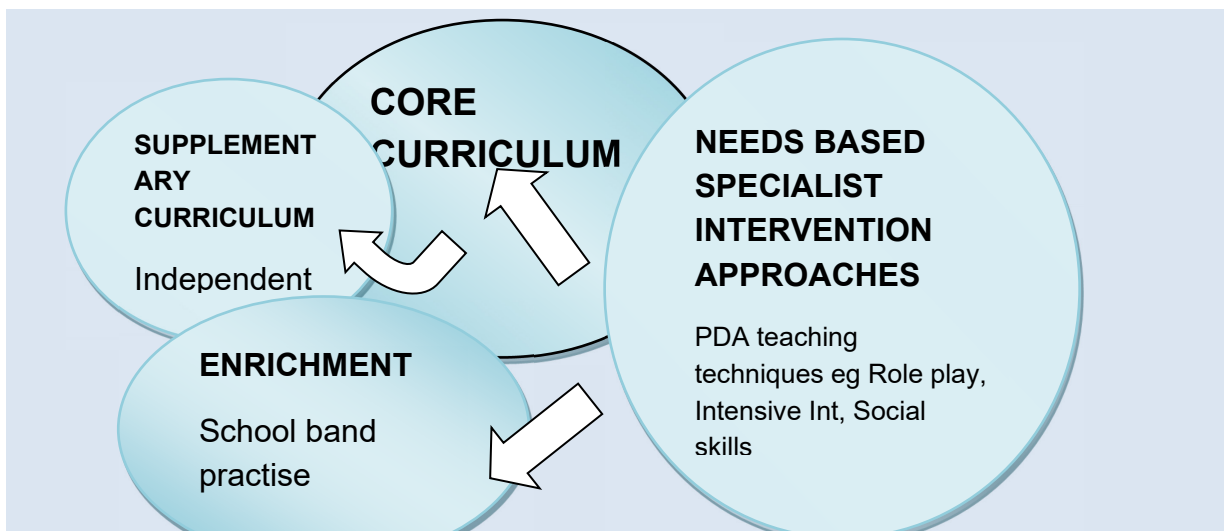
A number of strategies will be employed throughout the school to develop pupils' independence and ability to thrive away from school. From the outset, year seven pupils will be encouraged to work independently and develop their organisational skills. There will be high expectations for punctuality, uniform and codes of practice etc to prepare pupils for standards required in the workplace. Older pupils will be given opportunities to take on further responsibilities, for example becoming a peer mentor or taking part in decision-making in the School Council. They may like to follow programmes, such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, encouraging them to become responsible, active members of their community and carry out carefully-selected work experience. Throughout the school pupils will be given opportunities to learn from real life situations. Trips, visits and themed days will be a regular feature as these can offer very vivid learning experiences for the pupils as well as providing opportunities for developing life skills and links with the local community. Older pupils will be offered a chance to participate in travel training, helping them, when ready, move towards greater independence. For example; in Nexus MAT we encourage pupils to take part in the Young Sports Leaders days at a local football Stadium. This includes opportunity for aspiring leaders of sport to plan and implement activity days for other pupils from schools across the area. Prior

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classroom planning is involved and identified pupils coach and mentor their peers to complete tasks and challenges culminating in a special award/presentation day.

Video modelling will be used as a teaching tool throughout the school. This method is very useful with visual learners and can prove an effective teaching tool across a variety of curriculum areas. Many of the pupils at Discovery Academy will benefit from this, particularly in the areas of social skills training and addressing ASC related barriers to learning. Peripheral devices will enable a greater accessibility and application of this approach and are known to be particularly motivating to pupils. Discovery Academy staff will maximise the impact this visual stimuli based work has on pupil progress.

**Case Study 1** - Thomas is a 9 year old boy with a diagnosis of High Functioning Autism/PDA behavioural traits. Although he is functioning in or around his age expectations, the difficulties associated with his diagnosis manifest as high levels of anxiety around every day demands, social situations, auditory processing difficulties and consequently he requires a visual approach to support parts of learning. He responds well to a flexible and changing curriculum day in order to provide learning experiences that motivate and engage him. All aspects of his learning are delivered using a clear planned structure of 'outcomes' for the teacher who then adapts the degree of challenge in line with the Thomas's response(which can vary day to day) and disguises the expectations. He is making good progress in his learning with this support and particularly excels in Mathematics and Music. He receives an Interactive Music session to further promote his reciprocation, anticipation and turn taking skills. Intensive interaction is used as a vehicle to improve his emotional Literacy and develop his social communication as are social scripts to help him cope with situations in and out of school. Thomas is being encouraged to be more independent and the school has been working hard on building his confidence to access the school band practise (Something he identified as a goal on his learning pathway.





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**THOMAS Example day: This would keep an outcome based structure through the week but activities would change**

8.45-9	Arrival	12-1	Lunch on own table and club
9-9.30	Morning interest	1-1:45	Role play
9.30-10.15	Intensive interaction embed Lit	1:45-2:30	Small group work project(Science)
15min	Break	2:30-2:45	Project theme
10.30-11.15	Intensive interaction embed Maths	2:45 – 3.15	ICT What I've Learnt Today, home school book
11.15 – 12	Music	3.30 – 4.30	Observe school band with TA

### Case Study (Adapted from a real case study in Nexus MAT)

Two YR11 pupils' with SEMH/sensory needs showed a strong desire to work with animals and wish this to be part of their learning pathways. To enable them to make a successful transition to a land-based college, teaching staff have undertaken preparatory work to equip the pupils with some skills in order to anticipate, understand and learn to cope with the sensory challenges in the new environment – challenges which, unless sensitively managed, could prove potentially overwhelming.

'Sensory taster sessions' have been used to gradually introduce and de-sensitise them with sensory differences to challenges such as farm smells and textures. During these sessions, the pupils have the opportunity to visit the farm or animal care unit, experience wearing PPE and generally 'get a feel' for the college environment. Autism-specific strategies, such as Social Stories, have been used to support both pupils to know what to expect and how to respond.

The pupils and teacher visited the place once a week, teaching their own curriculum in a designated room which included good access to information technology. This enabled the pupils to become familiar with the college environment over the period of one school year. The pupils were able to record their learning journeys electronically and use the evidence towards accreditation as well as for learning recap. Staff from the farm provided pictures and information about the farm and also dropped in to see them in school. The link programme has substantially contributed to building learner confidence, both for those already at college and those planning to move to college in the future.

## CORE CURRICULUM

Chunked achievable targets across all

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**Case Study 3: Short stay intervention- *A pathway back to mainstream***

Jack is in Year 6. He has struggled with attendance at his mainstream primary since Year 2 and was admitted as a day patient to a Tier 4 primary unit in Year 5. Jack was formally diagnosed with ASC and separation anxiety during this period; despite intensive therapeutic input he struggled to maintain his engagement and was discharged. Due to Jack's anxiety, an early secondary placement was agreed at Nexus as it was felt by all professionals concerned that Jack would require a very slow integration back to school. Through a combination of home visits focusing on building relationships, staff were able to progress to home teaching and eventually encouraged Jack to attend the school building with his mother present after school hours. Building on the success of this, Jack then made a slow transition in the school utilising Lego therapy, FRIENDS invention strategies, 1:1 teaching and a bespoke curriculum offer. This has now progressed to full integration into the classroom. The entire process took only a term and Jack now attends full time and is a successful member of the school community.

**Example School Timetable for Discovery Academy**

Although learning will be personalised to meet individual needs, the school will follow a general understood structure and routine. The majority of pupils will arrive in school

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on transport provided by the Local Authority. The daily organisation is suggested below:

**Primary Phase**

8.45-9.00	Arrival
9.00-9.30	Registration and readiness to learn/ personalised programmes
9.30-10.15	Period 1:English/Maths/Core
10.15 – 10.30	Break
10.30-11.15	Period 2: English/Maths/Core
11.15 – 12:00	Period 3
12.00-1.00	Lunch inc access to lunch time clubs
1.00-1:45	Period 4
1:45-2:30	Period 5
2:30-2:45	Break
2:45 – 3.15	Period 6: Assembly / class time then end of school day
3.30 – 4.30	Optional Enrichment activity

**Secondary Phase**

8.45-9.00	Arrival
9.00-9.30	Registration and readiness to learn/ personalised programmes
9.30-10.30	Period 1: English/Maths/Core
10.30-10.45	Break
10.45-11.30	Period 2: English/Maths/Core
11.30-12.30	Period 3
12.30-1.30	Lunch inc access to lunch time clubs/catch up
1.30-1:45	Registration and readiness to learn/ personalised programmes
1:45-2:30	Period 4
2:30-2:45	Break
2:45-3:30	Period 5: Assembly / Lifeskills/personal programmes

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

3.30 – 4.45

Optional Enrichment activity

### **Accreditation and Qualifications**

A cohort of students at Discovery Academy will be cognitively able to study GCSEs *and* some of these may need to do so in partnership with other provision where the nature of the subject learning programme requires this. This will form part of their personalised timetable. Discovery Academy will work in partnership with other providers to ensure a full and rounded offer that best meets the needs of the pupil. For example, pupils may attend weekly PE sessions and take part in wider enterprise activity alongside pupils from another school. This could mean that academically spiky profiles are addressed with a combination of qualifications such as a smaller number of chosen GCSE's/BTec working alongside modular units of accreditation. In addition to National regulated qualifications the school will use a variety of nationally accredited programmes to enhance/extend learning such as programmes from ASCAN, OCR, NcfE suites.

### **Case Study**

#### **Harry**

Harry is a 14 year old boy who has shown a real interest in design and technology. He has an aptitude for the designing and making elements and has a good technical knowledge. He functions in or around his chronological age but struggles with traditional school environments and classrooms. As part of his programme, Harry has been attending a tech training workshop at a local employer premises (as well as working towards independent travel), supported by a Specialist Support worker, as part of the Key Stage 4 STEAM curriculum linking to work experience opportunity. He has access to all aspects of the scheme of work and has the opportunity to use a wide range of specialist tools and equipment. Harry will continue into his digital design pathway where he will access a very practical learning environment leading to technical award and either BTEC or GCSE qualifications.

With Key Stage 4, students can also begin their journey towards achieving the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze or Silver Award.

The curriculum will prioritise developing pupils' ability to make choices and decisions about their lives, and developing the confidence, skills and independence, attitude and communication skills to succeed as young adults.

**ASCAN PSD** – This qualification provides a framework for developing and accrediting personal and social skills for students working at Entry Levels 1 and 2.

### **Vocational Education**

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**OCN/NCfE: Independent Living and Using Employability Skills** – These qualifications are designed to develop personal and work-related skills. They are used to accredit the learning of students who will progress into further education (college), supported employment or want to develop independent living skills.

Students will follow courses in Work Skills both on the school site and in the wider community, for example at a local training Centre.

**Functional Skills Entry Level** – These qualifications develop Basic English, Maths and ICT skills in everyday and practical contexts. Students can achieve these qualifications at Entry Level 1, 2 or 3 in addition to GCSEs/A Levels.

### **Admissions**

Potential Admissions to the school will be highlighted to the school Head/Deputy by the Case Officers for SEND / EHC within the Local Authority timescales. Prospective parents/carers will be encouraged to visit the school as part of the preparation of their contribution towards their child's special needs assessment.

The transition arrangements will be **centred on the needs of the family and more specifically the child, whether this be a short or full school placement**. This may mean that for an individual this process of transitioning could take longer or indeed shorter. Liaison with any current school or provision will be essential to ensure that information is passed on and shared.

As the majority of our pupils will be grouped by age this may mean that they will encounter transition into a new class every year. In order to ease the anxiety of transition, the school will implement a transition programme which allows any pupils moving into a new classroom or new teacher to spend time in this new class before the long summer break. Families will be invited to meet the new teacher and share any information, concerns or worries before the Summer Break. Places will *usually* be taken up at the start of the school year, though by agreement with the Headteacher, places can be accessed at different times of the year providing an EHCP has been completed and the needs of the child have been clearly defined and are in line with the school's designation, for example: short stay placement covering 2 terms.

Consideration will always need to be given to the numbers in - and profile of each-year group.

The school will plan activities to support transition which will take place over the year to promote familiarity with new staff, routines or areas of school. These will include Curriculum taster days, Key events and joint curriculum activities.

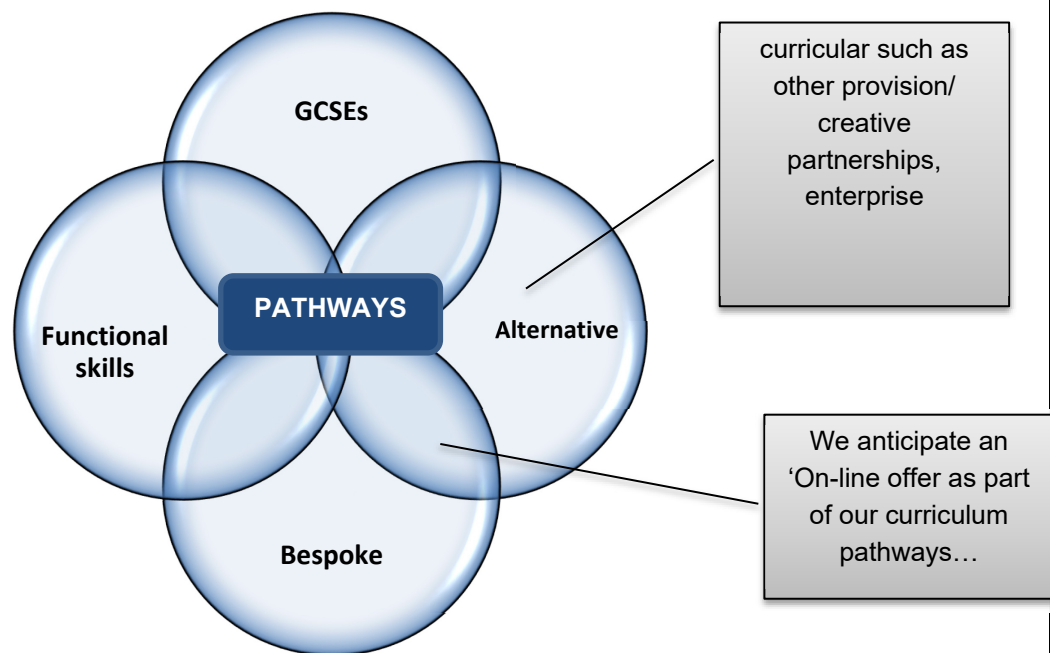
**D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

Person Centred Planning processes are utilised to gather the aspirations and views of students and parents throughout their time in school, however in Year 9 pupils and families are supported to prepare for transition. Bespoke learning programmes are then developed to support the student as they move towards these goals, particularly in Years 10 and 11.

**Meeting individual need**

The curriculum will be flexible with different pathways open to pupils of varying abilities. All pathways will have clear markers of success and end with formal qualifications.

The diagram below demonstrates the flexibility and interface the different pathways may have with each other in order to reach a full and appropriate programme for the pupil. For example the GCSE's pathway may be the primary programme with smaller aspects of supplementary study, eg partial Online module



The total environment at Discovery Academy will be tailored to the needs of pupils so that they can achieve optimal learning progression. Due to potential sensory needs of the pupil cohort; such as inability to handle chaos, sensitivity to stimuli, need for information to be displayed visually (often due to auditory processing difficulties) and lack of understanding of their environment; the interior of the building will be designed with visually recognisable pathways, orientation and low-arousal/quiet areas.

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All resources and areas will be visually clear, structured and organised to lessen anxiety levels. The school will showcase achievement and celebrate every success, all of which supports growing self-esteem and confidence.

### ***Nexus staff knowledge and skill base... as a cornerstone to curriculum support...***

From our experience of working with pupils with complex needs, we understand that although such co-morbid conditions are likely, there will common complexities which all pupils admitted to Discovery Academy will exhibit, including:

- Differences in social-emotional reciprocity, ranging, for example, from abnormal social approach and failure of normal back-and-forth conversation; to reduced sharing of interests, emotions, or affect; to failure to initiate or respond to social interactions.
- Differences in communicative behaviours used for social interaction, ranging, for example, from poor eye contact and limited body language or deficits in understanding and use of gestures; to a total lack of understanding facial expressions.
- Differences in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships, ranging, for example, from difficulties adjusting behaviour to suit various social contexts; to difficulties in sharing imaginative play or in making friends; to absence of interest in peers.
- Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns or verbal nonverbal behaviour (e.g., extreme distress at small changes, difficulties with transitions, rigid thinking patterns, greeting rituals, need to take same route or eat food every day).
- Highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus (e.g., strong attachment to or preoccupation with unusual objects, excessively circumscribed or perseverative interest).
- Hyper- or hypo reactivity to sensory input or unusual interests in sensory aspects of the environment (e.g., apparent indifference to pain/temperature, adverse response to specific sounds or textures, excessive smelling or touching of objects, visual fascination with lights or movement).

The staff will have both complex needs and curricular expertise and be trained in the interventions outlined. They will foster the notion to 'be the best learner' and be lifelong learners themselves and regularly undertake quality CPD to ensure they are providing the latest, evidenced-based interventions. Staff will have thorough knowledge of the latest curricular and ASC developments for example, as all teachers will be given protected time to undertake action research which in turn will be linked to individual appraisal. Discovery Academy will work closely with

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

parents/carers and clinical colleagues to design and implement programmes to, for example; increase the social communication skills of pupils and build confidence to learn; first and foremost by providing an environment for them which is appropriate to their needs. All staff will be trained to moderate their language to the skill level of the pupil, and to supplement instructions where needed, such as visually (comic strip conversations for example).

The use of ICT will be important for these pupils and Nexus MAT will keep up to date with new technologies in order to develop the communication skills and opportunities for all our pupils. For instance, some pupils may use iPad minis as their augmentative system and others may link with the local secondary for access to their resources, linking to joint project work.

### **The co-educational Discovery Academy**

Based on a number of factors including our current knowledge in Nexus MAT as well as national figures, girls are likely to be in the minority in Discovery Academy , according to National statistics, Special educational needs remain more prevalent in boys than girls in January 2017: 14.6% of boys were on SEN support compared to 8.1% of girls. Therefore, couple this with the larger prevalence of Males with ASC than females means the needs of this smaller female cohort will require careful consideration and opportunities specific to their requirements will be implemented in line with individual needs and the latest research. Girls are also likely to require support in managing puberty, in particular menstruation, as well as keeping safe as they mature physically. Girls will be given opportunities to mix with those of similar ages in our partner schools in order to provide them with a wider peer group and role models).

Careful consideration will be given to the particular needs of “gifted and talented” pupils. We see our responsibility as ensuring the provision of a curriculum, methodology, and pedagogic approach appropriate to their level of, and potential, ability. Opportunities will exist to work individually and in their wider home learning community and as learning will be personalised according to their profile pupils will have all the necessary conditions to attain the highest formal qualifications possible, commensurate with their abilities and interests.

Our experience shows that a number of factors need to be taken into account when working with EAL pupils (at present 24% of our Nexus MAT pupil profile). Pupils may be in a domestic environment where English is spoken and heard infrequently. Parents/carers will be supported to work as partners in their child’s learning and NEXUS will facilitate this through use of its expertise and resources. This can include the Trust’s access to interpreters.



## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

### **Behaviour**

When displaying behaviour that challenges, we believe our pupils are not being difficult, they are 'in difficulty' and it is our fundamental responsibility to place their needs at the heart of any decision we make and how we go about supporting them. At Discovery Academy we will plan and look for the setting conditions, i.e. Anything that makes challenging behaviour more or less likely to occur *and* then implement teaching the pupil the skills to cope as part of a strong inter and multi-disciplinary team approach.

All our pupils are individuals possessing individual baseline behaviour with a set of different strengths and abilities. They may have specific effects of trauma and underdeveloped co-regulation and self-regulation skills to be able to cope with this. Our staff are trained to spot any possible reasons, such as physical discomfort, e.g., illness, medication *and* to then work proactively with other professionals and the pupil themselves, should there be a need for an individualised crisis management plan this would be implemented.

All the staff at Discovery Academy will consider the pupil in all they do, this starts before pupils arrive at school with the realisation that they are the fundamental driver in whether the pupil has a good or bad day. Knowing this, staff will consider how they themselves feel at that point of decision making, then consider what does this pupil feel, need, or want, how is the environment affecting them and how do they best respond?

As a member of Nexus staff, by applying these considerations we will ensure the needs of the pupils are primary in our minds as educators. This is fundamental to our Nexus approach and will be a *modus operandi* for the school.

We will operate a phased approach to behaviour management. Where there are difficulties with this approach; a more personal plan will be adopted. This may include modifications to the behaviour system such as accessing time out in another place or for a longer/shorter period of time (whichever is most appropriate). All Nexus Schools adopt and adhere to the '*BILD Accredited Team Teach*' approach to managing behaviour including using the least restrictive interventions and the use of any restrictive physical intervention, always as a last resort.

All pupils will have access to a planned place of escape (for example a quiet Calming room with minimal distraction and low sensory arousal) where they can go when their anxieties become so great that they cannot manage them.

The staged process to behaviour management is as follows:

### **Special Needs Waves of Intervention Model**

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

Wave 1 is good quality, inclusive teaching which takes into account the learning needs of all the pupils in the classroom. This includes providing differentiated work and creating an inclusive learning environment.

Wave 2 outlines specific, additional and time-limited interventions provided for some pupils who are falling behind the age expected level. Wave 2 interventions are often targeted at a group of pupils with similar needs.

Wave 3 is targeted provision for a small percentage of pupils who either require a high level of additional support/specialised provision in order to address their needs or is for pupils who have been identified for an intervention designed to accelerate progress.

We will aim to encourage appropriate behaviour by:

- Offering every child and their family a named “Key Person” who will be their main point of contact and who will endeavour to ensure every child feels safe and cared for.

*As part of positive behaviour support*

- Modelling, explaining and forming class rules alongside pupils to offer them ownership of their rules
- Ensuring we deliver an “Emotionally Literate” curriculum where self-esteem and self-control are fostered
- Ensuring a zero tolerance approach to any form of bullying and addressing any incidents of bullying. (in conjunction with the Anti Bullying Policy).
- Talking with pupils about the decisions which affect them so they are aware of, and can take ownership of what will happen
- Encouraging pupils to be responsible and to take responsibility for all they do
- Celebrating our successes no matter how small they may be and in a way which acknowledges and celebrates the significant successes of every child
- Sharing these successes with partners
- Rewarding good behaviour through the use of rewards which have been personalised so they are meaningful to each pupil
- Ensuring any criticism is constructive and fair with the overall focus being one of “making a good choice” or “making the correct decision”
- Making sure we are fair and consistent.
- Ensuring transition times are well thought through planned accordingly and communicated with pupils in a sensitive manner.
- Communicating with parents in order to celebrate pupils’ successes and help them further improve their behaviour
- Engaging with the services offered by the outside agencies to support families in encouraging positive behaviour and the setting of boundaries.

**D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

Wave 2 – additional in-school intervention.

We believe it is important to work in a proactive way and as such staff will continually be mindful of the behaviour of the pupils in their class. When it is becoming apparent that a child requires additional support to manage their behaviour the class team will:

- Raise a concern with the behaviour co-ordinator. Staff will submit a referral form which outlines observed behaviours that are causing concern.
- Engage with the behaviour co-ordinator who will lead on a series of observations of the child in as many settings as possible. Where appropriate this will include a home visit where the child's family can be encouraged to share information.
- Work alongside the behaviour co-ordinator who will arrange a meeting with the class team to share the outcomes of observations and complete a Behaviour Analysis Form for each identified concerning behaviour. An action plan will then be completed
- Invite the child's family into school to share outcomes of the observations and agree an action plan for the child.
- Implement the 'Individual Support Plan' for the child ensuring it is shared with all team members. The class team are to continue to observe as before using the 'Record of Behaviours' sheet This will then be monitored for a further half term
- If the team conclude the plan is working it should be continued but evaluated regularly. If the team conclude the plan is not working then a meeting with the behaviour coordinator should be arranged. This will enable the team to discuss and determine the next steps.

Wave 3- the behaviour co-ordinator will seek further professional and / or clinical advice via the CAMHS professional who is commissioned by the school.

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 and progress may be affected. The school will implement a Waves of Intervention model to escalate any issues or concerns to specialist teams at Wave 2 and other Professionals at Wave 3.

An example of the detail within the different areas is as follows:

**D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

Areas of need.	Wave 1 – Inclusive quality first teaching	Wave 2 – additional in-school interventions via Specialist Support Team	Wave 3 – referral to Professionals / experts
Social/Emotional Communication, Inclusion back to mainstream Reading Writing Maths SRE Engagement Involvement	Personalised programme and timetable. Classroom environments meet the needs of pupils and are engaging and motivating. Shared goals and aims throughout the class Breadth of curriculum coverage and entitlement. Integrated programmes Social and/or Communication approaches consistently applied. Resources and equipment available to meet pupil need. Continuous provision.	Personalised targets inc scaffolding personal skills to deal with transition back Therapeutic programmes ie, desensitisation, music / art therapy. Personal care and hygiene programmes. Behaviour workshops and management plans. Visual support. Low and High Tech Multi-sensory support for learning. EAL Sensory Integration / Sensory Diet Family Support SRE	Clinical Psychologist (CAHMS) SALT Educational Psychologist Assistive Technology social care Early Help Advisory Teacher for the Hearing/Visually Impaired Audiologist Dieticians Education Welfare Officer Mainstream and Special Schools Occupational Therapists Orthoptist School Nurse

In conclusion, the schools expected intake will include a wide variety of sub-group specific and individual needs. We recognise that these arise from a pupil’s profile and additional psychological, medical, cultural and/or social conditions. We will value each pupil equally, plan for their needs, and respect each pupil for the contribution they bring to our community. They will be provided with an outstanding educational environment which will ensure they have attained the highest levels and are as independent as possible. Transition from the school will be carefully managed. We will ensure that all pupils leaving will have the support they need in approaching adulthood by working closely with other external agencies, employers and Further Education providers.

**D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

If you are applying for more than one school, please provide one version of this section, referring to individual schools or circumstances where relevant.

Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- refer to the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

From experience of working with pupils with Autism and Learning Difficulties we understand that there are particular challenges for assessment. Pupils can exhibit spikey learning profiles. They rarely spontaneously generalise skills and the measures of success are rarely rooted in academic progress alone.

*At Nexus we believe; the capacity of an individual to flourish lies beyond formal assessment and should include a wider set of key skills...*

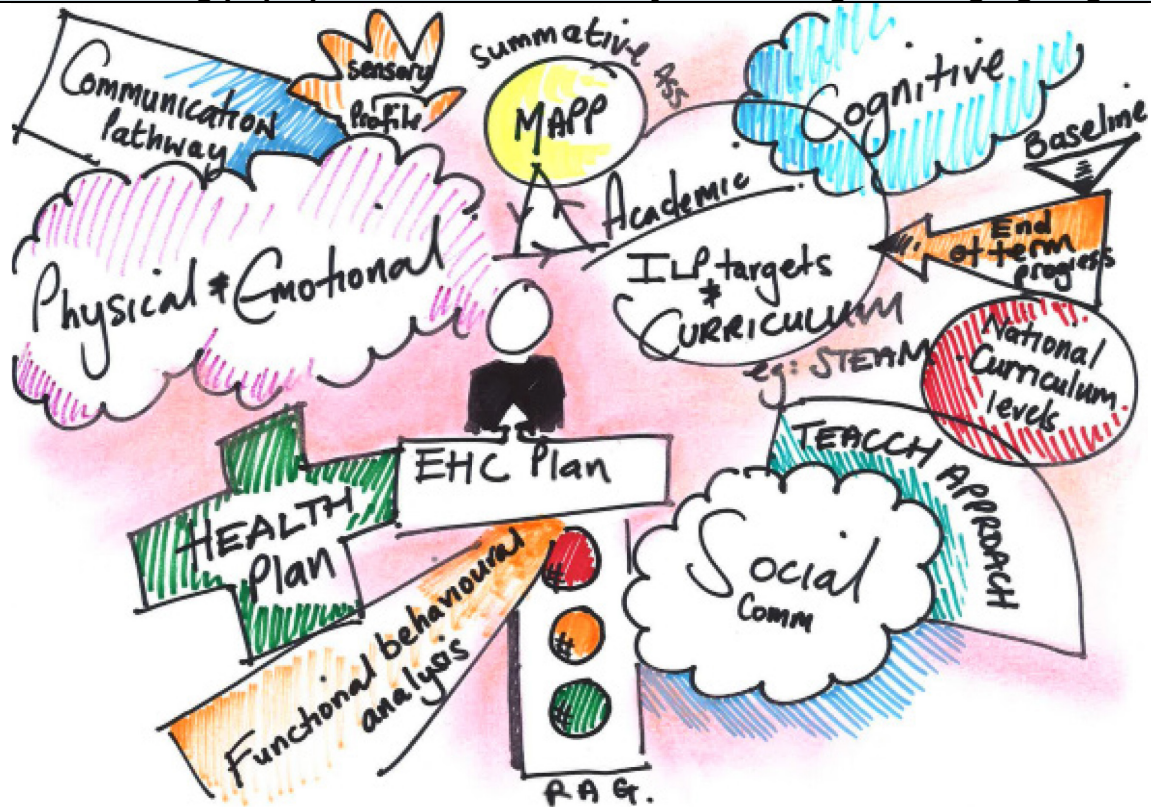
Discovery Academy will utilise carefully planned and appropriate systems and tools for assessing pupils in order to maximise intelligence for assessment for learning and progression across the whole child. By learning from best practice research we will promote using a wide range of formal and informal of assessing pupil progress in all areas inc: social communication, emotional well-being and independence skills. This will be necessary because:

- Assessment needs to take place across several different agencies monitoring different areas of functioning (e.g. physical, social, emotional and cognitive aspects of development)
- Autism is a spectrum condition and therefore it is not a case of one size fits all even when assessing just one aspect of development.

The tools which we will be most commonly used to measure progress and achievement will include (but are not exhaustive):

- Academic performance (e.g. B Squared) assessed by teacher
- Comparative attainment assessed by teacher
- Total communication assessed by S&LT
- Sensory profile assessed by OT
- Wellbeing and behaviour (e.g. Leuven's and Boxall) assessed by the MDT
- Emotional Regulation/Anxiety assessed psychologist by teacher
- Functional behaviour assessed by psychologist
- Independence assessed by Specialist Support Team
- Social skills assessed by appropriately trained professional.

## D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets



Performance data for Special Schools within the local area has been considered when setting the Key Performance Indicators and Academic Outcome aspirations; however the schools have a broader profile of pupil needs. We have looked at this data and data obtained from the National Autistic Society alongside data contained in the DfE, 'Special educational needs: an analysis and summary of data sources', May 2017 to support some of the benchmarks identified.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/615192/Special\\_educational\\_needs\\_Publication\\_May17\\_v6.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/615192/Special_educational_needs_Publication_May17_v6.pdf)

We will seek to develop and utilise partnerships in order to moderate and benchmark judgements. In the first year of opening we will seek to commission the Assessment Lead at a partner school to offer advice, moderate and challenge to the school regarding our systems and processes, target setting and the schools judgements about progress and undertake Quality Assurance activity to triangulate evidence.

We will of course also use our expertise and resources across the Multi Academy Trust to benchmark where relevant and appropriate.

### Defining and measuring success

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

### **School Information Management System (SIMS)**

The SIMS procedures will involve recording and monitoring the ability, attainment, progress and behaviour of students through mark sheets, tracking grids, and performance analysis. It will allow class teachers, parents/carers, and the SLT to see each student's individual record and will also be available for analysis when reviewing behaviour plans. SIMS will allow teachers to record positive and negative behaviours each session and will be adapted specifically for the needs of students with ASC. Parents/carers will have access to their own child's data.

Pupils will follow different pathways according to their ability. As a general example; Students that have achieved their age related expectations will be able to access the GCSE curriculum.

Those that are working below this level will be able to access a combination of entry level English, maths and science as well as other GCSEs and vocational qualifications.

### **Assessment and data tracking system**

Discovery Academy will use a range of assessment tools to closely track, monitor and evaluate the progress being made by students towards achieving targets as set out in their ECHPs, and these will be used as the basis for planning

- B Squared – assessment procedures across the curriculum from P Levels, National Curriculum, Foundation and the Pre-Entry Level and Entry levels of the Adult Curriculum post 16. B-Squared has the advantage of using national assessment recording points so that the Academy's data can be compared with other Academies around the country.
- The B-Squared assessment will allow teachers to record whether the child is meeting age related expectations for their year group and allows small steps /points to be accumulated/analysed so that the strengths and areas for development for each pupil are clear
- Discovery Academy use the B Squared connecting steps CSAM programme for this comparison and analysis
- B Squared have also developed autism descriptors which show progression in the following areas of autism: Communication; Flexibility of Thought; Social Interaction; and Emotional Regulation. This will allow us to map the impact of a person's autism and guide the development of targeted support strategies.

### **Whole School KPI**

100% Teaching will be good or better with increasing % of outstanding T&L year on year

## D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets

**Academic outcomes: Further development of pupil performance targets will take place through partnership collaboration should Nexus be successful in its application**

### Successful learners

85% of students who meet or exceed age related expectations in core subjects at KS2 end, to achieve five or more grade C or better at GCSE (or equivalent) by the end of Key Stage 4.

80% of students who are not entered for GCSE (or equivalent) to obtain a BTEC/Vocational based or other comparable qualification.

95% or more of pupils to achieve their termly Individual Education Plan targets for pupil progression. Where it is identified that an individual is falling short, interventions or additional support maybe necessary. For example, it could be that additional teaching is needed for literacy catch up and pupil premium maybe used to support this intervention. The cyclical process of planning, implementing and evaluating a pupils progress will be both rigorous and detailed and the systems used will allow for early identification and support.

<i>Outcome area</i>	<i>Target area per year</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Amber</i>	<i>Red</i>
Attendance (NA Sp Sch 90.9% 2015-2016 data)	Pupil attendance (monitored weekly)	>93%	90-93%	<90%

In deciding these targets we have looked at absence across both special schools and also pupil special needs cohorts as per the following data reference taken from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-2015-to-2016>

Where a pupil is showing as amber or red, our monitoring will pick thus up early and interventions will be used. For example; we would analyse the reasoning behind the lower % and address with support that may include parental involvement, transport or person centred welfare.

We know that academic outcomes alone, do not fully measure the progress and achievements which our pupils will make. Research, such as 'Educational provision and outcomes for people on the autism spectrum', Whitemeyer et all, 2011, involving young people with Autism, parents and carers explore how a wide range of educational outcomes are equally important to them in their journey towards adulthood.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Targets



## D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets

Our targets are for individual students and the Academy as a whole. These cover academic progress, attainment, attendance, student behaviour, well-being, participation, and student/parental satisfaction.

They are aligned to the Nexus priorities taking into account Government figures:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/615192/Special\\_educational\\_needs\\_Publication\\_May17\\_v6.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/615192/Special_educational_needs_Publication_May17_v6.pdf)

KPI	By Year 6	By Year 11
To ensure that each pupil is able to achieve his or her fullest potential through planning, recording, assessing and monitoring in a systematic way.	<p>100% of pupils have a learning pathway.</p> <p>95% of pupils will achieve Individual Educational targets.</p> <p>Pupils with (10%) persistent absence attendance to improve year-on-year.</p>	<p>80% of students achieve vocational accreditation.</p> <p>70% of students, who are entered, achieve Entry Level or GCSE qualification.</p> <p>85% of students attend college or meaningful work placement.</p> <p>91% achieve a positive Post 16 transition to either edu, Emp or Training</p> <p>Pupils with (10%) persistent absence attendance to improve year-on-year.</p> <p>60% to gain D of E bronze award.</p> <p>20% to gain D of E Silver award.</p>

### NEET KPI

- Of the regions in England, Yorkshire & Humber had the highest proportion of young people (16-24yrs) that were NEET in Q1 2017 with 14.7% compared to 9% nationally.

However, around 30% of all young people with disabilities at 16-24 are not in education, employment or training

Discovery Academy aim to reduce this figure through its creative partnerships bespoke learning programmes and effective support mechanisms. This will include the work we do to better equip pupils for the next step inc; moving to college/sixth form, internships, work coaching, enterprise and other specialist support needed.

*\*DfE 2017 NEET figures*

**D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

<p>Pupils to be prepared for an independent life with effective social skills and good emotional well-being.</p>	<p>100% of pupils have a learning pathway and supporting system in place.</p> <p>95% of students are able to work alongside peers.</p> <p>Number of behavioural incidents attributed to each individual reduces by 60% following intervention.</p>	<p>100% of pupils are able to undertake independence tasks commensurate with their ability with supports.</p> <p>95% of students are able to be part of a social group/team.</p> <p>60% of students are able to manage their own regulation or anxiety using strategies taught.</p>
<p>To develop the skills and strategies to be valued, visible and fully included in our community and in the communities where they live. We want them to be active and responsible citizens.</p>	<p>100% of pupils to participate in a range of school and community-based activities.</p> <p>85% of students attend enrichment or afterschool activity.</p> <p>100% of pupils placed on short stay will have access to mainstream pathways with support.</p>	<p>85% of pupils to have undertaken an external work placement</p> <p>100% of pupils to have undertaken an internal placement.</p> <p>95% to attend enrichment or afterschool activity.</p> <p>30% to study specific programmes within their local mainstream school.</p> <p>100% of pupils to have undertaken the travel training programme.</p>

**Self-Confident individuals**

90% or more of students will develop the attributes of resilience and resourcefulness that will enable them to be more self-aware, independent and effective contributors to society; this will be evidenced through the pupil progress cycle.

98% or more of students will develop life and independence skills (supported where necessary)

For any pupils whose extreme behaviour is managed (as a last resort) with appropriate and assessed physical intervention, a rigorously monitored reduction programme will ensure reduction and working towards elimination of the use of restraint procedures this will be evidenced through monitoring and recording

**Responsible Citizens:** The following target areas will largely include pupils working across the 14-16 age bracket in line with work related learning.

95% or more of pupils will successfully complete a careers programme with the careers adviser where appropriate.

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

95% or more of pupils on this pathway to complete a work placement in a local business or institution.

85% or more of students will develop skills to generalise learning through regular opportunities to apply and practise skills in the local community.

60% or more of students will undertake a variation of community service.

### **Baselining**

The pupils who will be admitted to Discovery Academy will already be in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan which will provide the school with an overview of their needs and required provision.

However, all pupils will be baselined upon entry to the school through a variety of observations which will provide further specific information regarding their cognitive levels, learning style, learning needs and identify barriers to learning and inform initial assessments around:

- Academic levelling and comparative analysis (Using B Squared system/CSAM/CASPA)
- Communication passport (S&LT directed)
- Access to learning: Therapeutic and clinical interventions- eg Sensory Integration/diet/Psychiatric
- Engagement,
- Functional behaviour analysis

The baseline assessment will take place by an inter-disciplinary team within 6 weeks of full-time entry.

Following the Baseline assessment a One Page Profile, Individual Learning Plan and an individual timetable produced.

Area of Need	Assessment type	By whom?
Academic	Pre/Entry Age related Expectation Measure Key stage/Examinations	Deputy/AHT Class Team
Functional Communication	Communication Pathway	Speech and Language therapist / Specialist Support Team
Behaviour	Functional Behaviour Analysis	Educational Psychologist / Specialist Support Team
Sensory Processing	Sensory Profile	Occupational Therapist

The information gained from the Baseline Assessment will be entered onto the schools Data Tracking and Assessment Database as discussed earlier. Data collated

## D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets

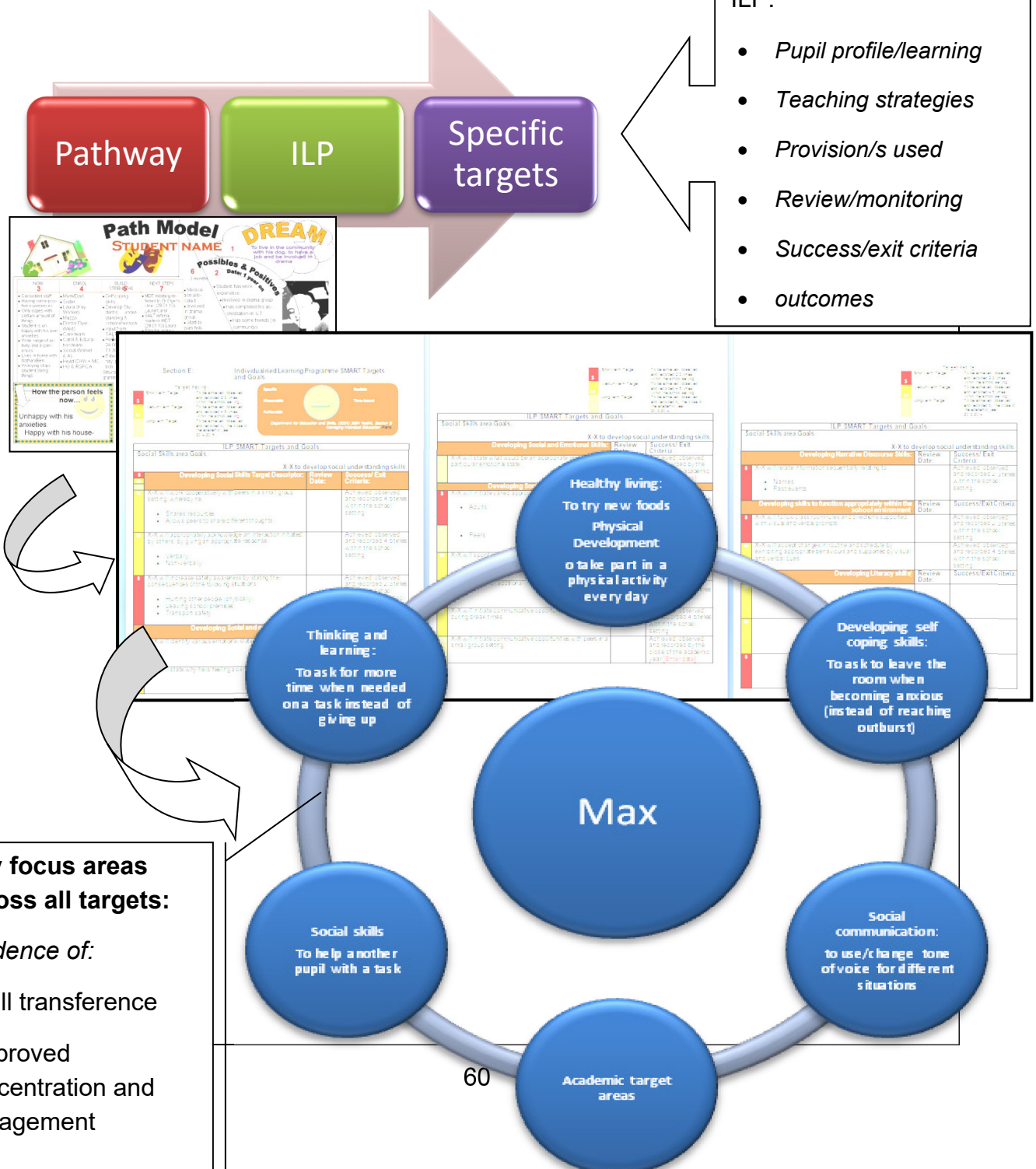
from assessments will be uploaded to the summative assessment tool for future National Comparison.

It will also provide information which will be included in each pupils Individual Learning Plan (an example IEP/ILP follows)

### INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION/LEARNING PLANS

Each pupil will have an Individual Learning plan (ILP) which collates all of the information regarding their targets across the holistic curriculum.

Below is an example section of an ILP for a 10 year old boy (Max) with ASD and SEMH may look like: *Pathway to ILP to SMART target setting*

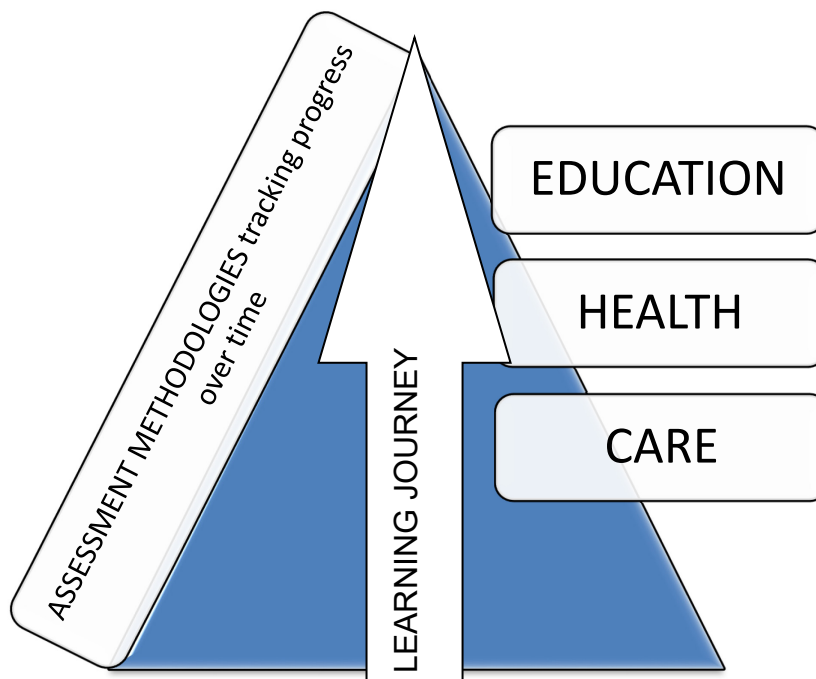


## D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets

The use of AfL (Assessment for Learning) will be a central feature of classroom activity at Discovery Academy in order to ensure that teachers maximise progress and summative judgements made are rooted in evidence. In classrooms assessment for learning will be practised, and pupils will be encouraged to be more active in their learning and associated assessment. The ultimate purpose of assessment for learning is to create self-regulated young people who can leave school able and confident to continue learning throughout their lives.

Formative assessment is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by pupils and for teachers to decide how well they are doing and what they need to do next. All members of staff will be expected to undertake observation and recording activity during each lesson.

Discovery Academy will have 3 key end of term points during the school year for tracking and evaluating outcomes; December, March and July. These will feed into the annual review which will show the distance travelled from the year starting point. Judgements made about the progress made will feature many different components in relation to individualised assessment but ultimately covering the three areas of the EHC Plan



## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

The outcomes will be inputted onto the schools Database (CASPA/CSAM). Each class teacher will submit data regarding the percentage of Individual Learning Plan targets achieved and detailed academic assessment information. This data will be uploaded onto the summative tracking system in order to make comparisons and also track progress towards expected outcomes based upon the starting point at Baseline.

Some pupils following an Autism Specific Approach to learning such as TEACCH will require a more detailed approach to measure their progress and attainment. This will be done through collating Assessment and Pupil Progress information and analysing the rates of progress towards mastery through Prompting, Fluency, Generalisation and Maintenance towards the individual TEACCH targets.

The Head will pay particular interest to the data outcomes and any variance for particular groups of pupils. These will include:

- Girls,
- Looked After Pupils,
- Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium,
- EAL,
- Ethnicity.

The Deputy Head will also have regard for the outcomes for each year group, each class group, each key stage and overall outcomes in each of the Core Subjects.

The Middle leaders will scrutinise the data for class groups and at an individual level in preparation for Pupil Progress Meetings.

Subject Leaders will identify any pupils or groups of pupils who are not making expected progress or those who are making accelerated progress within their subject.

This analysis will be recorded as a Data Tracking report which will specify how many pupils are making expected, above expected and below expected progress in each of the curriculum subjects and towards their Individual Learning Plan targets.

We will provide a National Comparison and over time the school will be able to RAG rate the outcomes against the schools own challenging targets which will be Benchmarked against those set by similar schools. The Data tracking report will be submitted to the Local Governing Body and used to inform the Schools Self Evaluation.

### **Social and emotional Development**

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

Within the school behavioural data will be drawn together and analysed by the behaviour lead to inform trends and strategic development. The data will be managed by the behaviour lead using an MIS system for efficiency and analytical rigour.

A resulting action plan will be devised based on behavioural difficulties which arise as both whole school/group trends and individual pupil needs.

The impact of behavioural incidents will be raised within termly pupil progress meetings, class teams and teachers and class team meetings. The impact of behaviours are discussed within annual reviews to ensure that procedures are in place and pupils and families have appropriate supports.

Pupils will also be asked to communicate their views regarding all aspects of the schools work and their targets, aspirations and outcomes through specifically designed questionnaires and focus groups. The outcomes will support school improvement.

### **Attendance**

Attendance will be monitored following typical school guidelines, including punctuality registers and any absence followed up with First Day absence calls home.

Attendance will have a high priority through the 'Attendance Matters' initiative and school will seek to work in partnership with families. Attendance data will be monitored daily by the Data and Systems manager and weekly by the Headteacher.

### **Pupil Progress Meetings**

Pupil progress meetings will be held termly (inc the annual review) to ensure that timely feedback regarding pupil performance and to address barriers to learning are discussed with class teams.

Senior Leaders will meet with the class teacher prior to review every child's ongoing learning and achievement. Any areas of underachievement / barriers to learning will be identified and an action plan produced. Data will be analysed here to ensure the identification of any pupils making less than expected progress and to plan how to address this.

### **Pastoral Support Plans**

All pupils will have a Pastoral Support Plan. This will contain a one page profile, plans for personal care, risk assessments, medication / care plans, behaviour and social /communication.

### **Quality of Planning.**

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

Teachers will plan together in Key Stage Teams, taking advantage of the curriculum strengths of team members. The Medium Term planning will be submitted to the Middle leaders teacher each term or half term (dependent upon the length of the planning cycle) who will provide feedback regarding 5 key areas:

- We expect to see a full set of **PLANNING** which demonstrates coverage of the long term plans.
- We expect planning to be **PERSONALISED**, identifying targets for each individual.
- We expect to see explicit links to the **PATHWAY** which each individual is following.
- We expect to see **PLANNING FOR PROGRESSION** (linear/lateral) via links to levels.
- We expect to see **PROCEDURES** – what is the child learning and which activities will enable them to encounter, practice, and consolidate their learning.

### **Medium Term Planning**

All Medium Term planning will be evaluated and submitted to the Senior Leadership Team each half term / term. These evaluations will provide important information about pupils' learning and achievement. This information will be recorded and tracked over the academic year and will be discussed during Pupil Progress Meetings each term (Monitored each half term by SLT).

### **Pupil Assessment and Tracking File**

All pupils will have an individual file containing evidence towards their current levels of achievement. It will also include evidence of achievement of Medium Term targets (subject related) and their Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

### **Monitoring and Improving the Quality of Teaching**

The greatest resource at Discovery Academy will be the Teaching and Learning Team. They will have the most influence over the progress and achievements for the pupils and we will need to invest quality time to ensure that they are confident, knowledgeable resilient and effective.

A Quality Assurance cycle will be implemented at Discovery Academy which aligns to the Quality Assurance activity at the other Nexus MAT schools. This will mean that peer review, moderation and challenge can take place through consistent monitoring and evaluation across the MAT. However, as discussed earlier, we will also ensure our involvement in local and cross borough teacher development including joint observations and peer reviews.

The information gathered regarding teaching and learning will be entered onto a Nexus Dashboard so that schools can identify strengths and areas for development



## D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets

regarding teaching and learning in other schools. This information can then be used to identify and deploy strategies to help the schools improve in this area.

We will only undertake any monitoring or evaluative activity if it adds value to the quality of teaching and / or learning for our pupils. Before, agreeing any such activity we will reflect upon the following question process.

WHERE ARE WE PLACED NOW AND HOW DO WE FEEL ABOUT IT

HOW DO WE GET BETTER

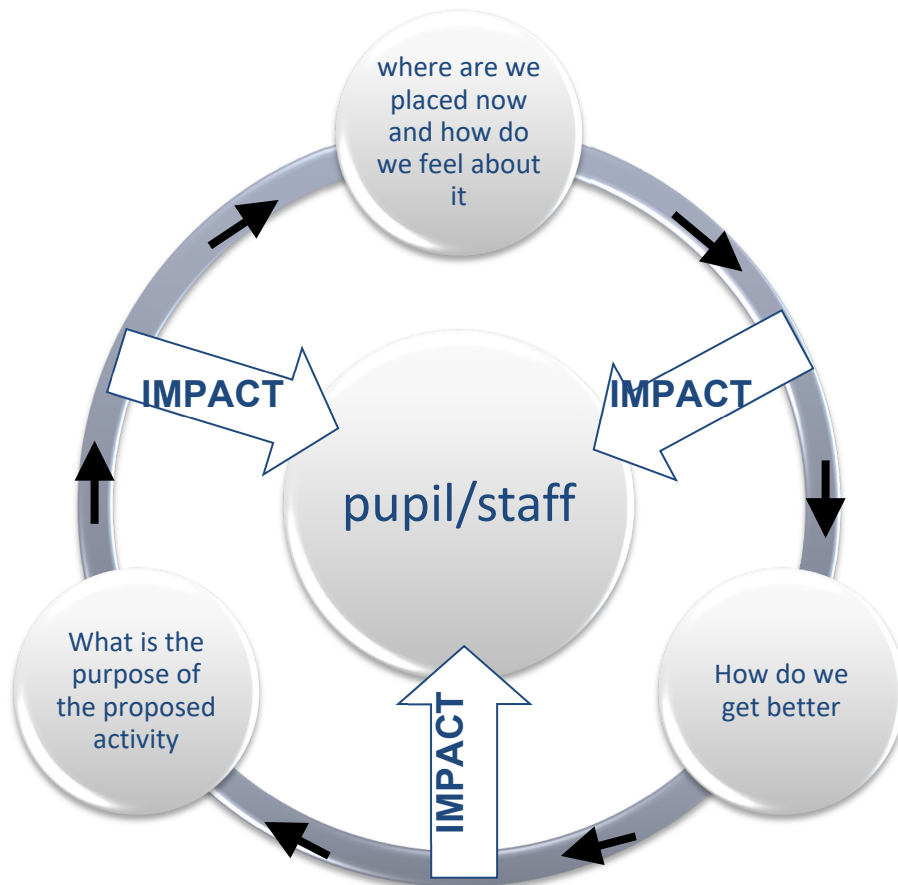
WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY

**WHAT IMPACT WILL THIS HAVE ON THE PUPIL?**

**WHAT IMPACT WILL THIS HAVE ON THE TEACHER?**

Continuous reflection

WHERE ARE WE PLACED NOW AND HOW DO WE FEEL ABOUT IT



### Team meetings

At Discovery Academy we will invest resource in enabling effective communication with the whole school community. Each day, staff will have the opportunity to meet as a class team to discuss the targets for each child and any classroom / therapeutic / intervention work to be undertaken during the day. A whole school briefing each week (which may take different formats and in addition to assembly) will ensure timely communication of events, policy or procedural changes and general notices. A

## D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets

rota of weekly meetings involving whole school, teaching teams, department teams will support the sharing of practice and continued professional development.

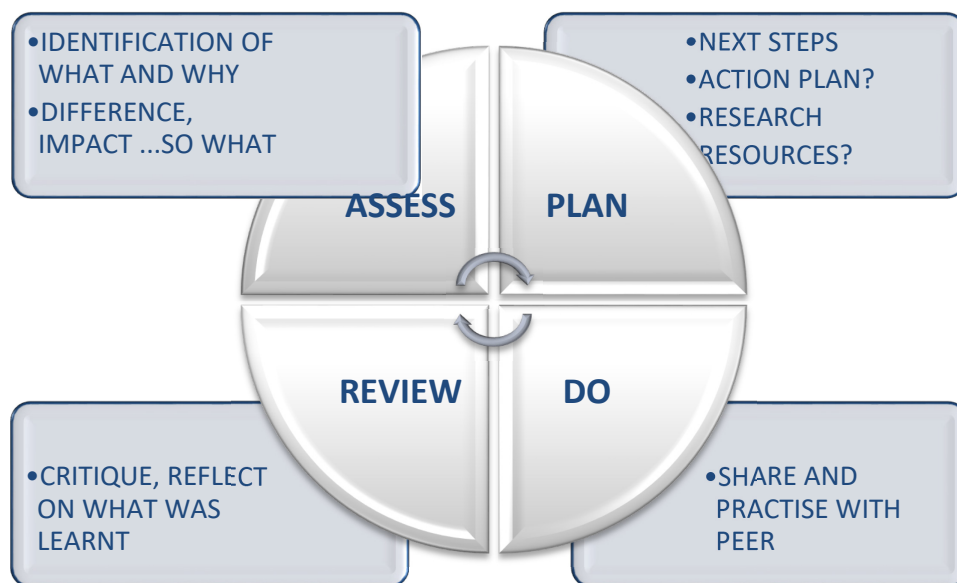
### Practice Development

As part of the Performance management/appraisal process, each teacher will be allocated a member of the SLT who will gather information, support and challenge the teacher through the 'overall Performance Management' element of this process.

We want our teaching staff to challenge themselves and others and *be* challenged to 'be the best learner'. At Discovery Academy, we want our teachers to develop the confidence to ask for support and to reflect upon their practice. In addition to more formal observations, teachers will have the opportunity to develop their own practice through Practice Development. Initially, a member of the SLT will observe an element of practice which the teacher has identified as requiring support and then facilitate support for the teacher to improve this area through discussion, team-teaching, modelling, peer mentoring or signposting them to 'good practice'.

As teachers develop their confidence and responsibility for developing their own practice they will also be encouraged to support one another through this approach.

An example of this process may look like this.



### Parent and professional meetings

A meeting with parents / carers will be held each term with teachers to discuss the holistic progress made by their child. The main focus of these meetings will be to share information and to ensure that parents understand what their child is learning and how to support their learning at home. This maybe an opportunity for clarifying

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

approaches, sharing key points or even progressing further opportunities to involve parents in training/extended learning.

### **Research enquiry**

In response to the changing needs of the pupil, Discovery Academy needs to be an adaptive, ‘learning’ organisation *and* as such will develop a positive learning culture to support this. It is imperative that staff are given the time to ensure that they remain up to date with the latest research, pedagogy and practice. On an appropriately realistic rota, teaching staff will be released from their classroom/assigned time to undertake enquiry into an area of interest, innovation, research or practice linked to the school improvement priorities. Above all it must make a difference to the pupil and have impact!

The member of staff will be provided with the time and in return they will be expected to share their findings with the teaching team through leading a staff meeting, presenting work or uploading their work to the electronic ‘staff area’.

### **Teacher summary**

All the information collected regarding the Quality of Teaching and Learning will be transferred into a single page Teacher Summary. This will provide evidence towards the Teacher Appraisal and to whole school evaluation.

Example areas of focus include:

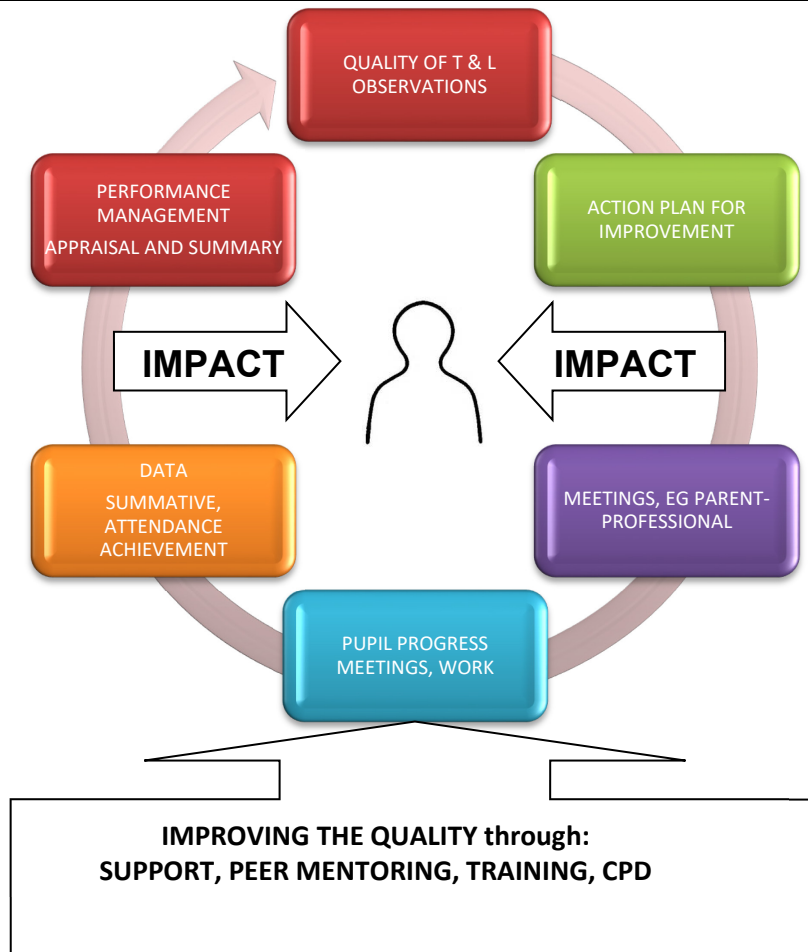
- PUPIL PROGRESS
- LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
- PUPIL SELF ASSESSMENT
- LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT
- PLANNING & RECORDING
- MDT WORKING
- SCHOOL REPRESENTATION/RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIP WORK
- CPD TRAINING RECORD
- EXTRA CURRICULAR SUPPORT
- OVERALL JUDGEMENT
- ACTIONS

### **Appraisal**

Performance at appraisal will be linked to pay progression and will be based upon the evidence provided through the teacher Summary. The Local Governing Body will work with the SLT to decide how appraisal outcomes will lead to pay decisions.

The Monitoring Quality of Teaching and Learning cycle will be implemented each term and can be summarised as follows.

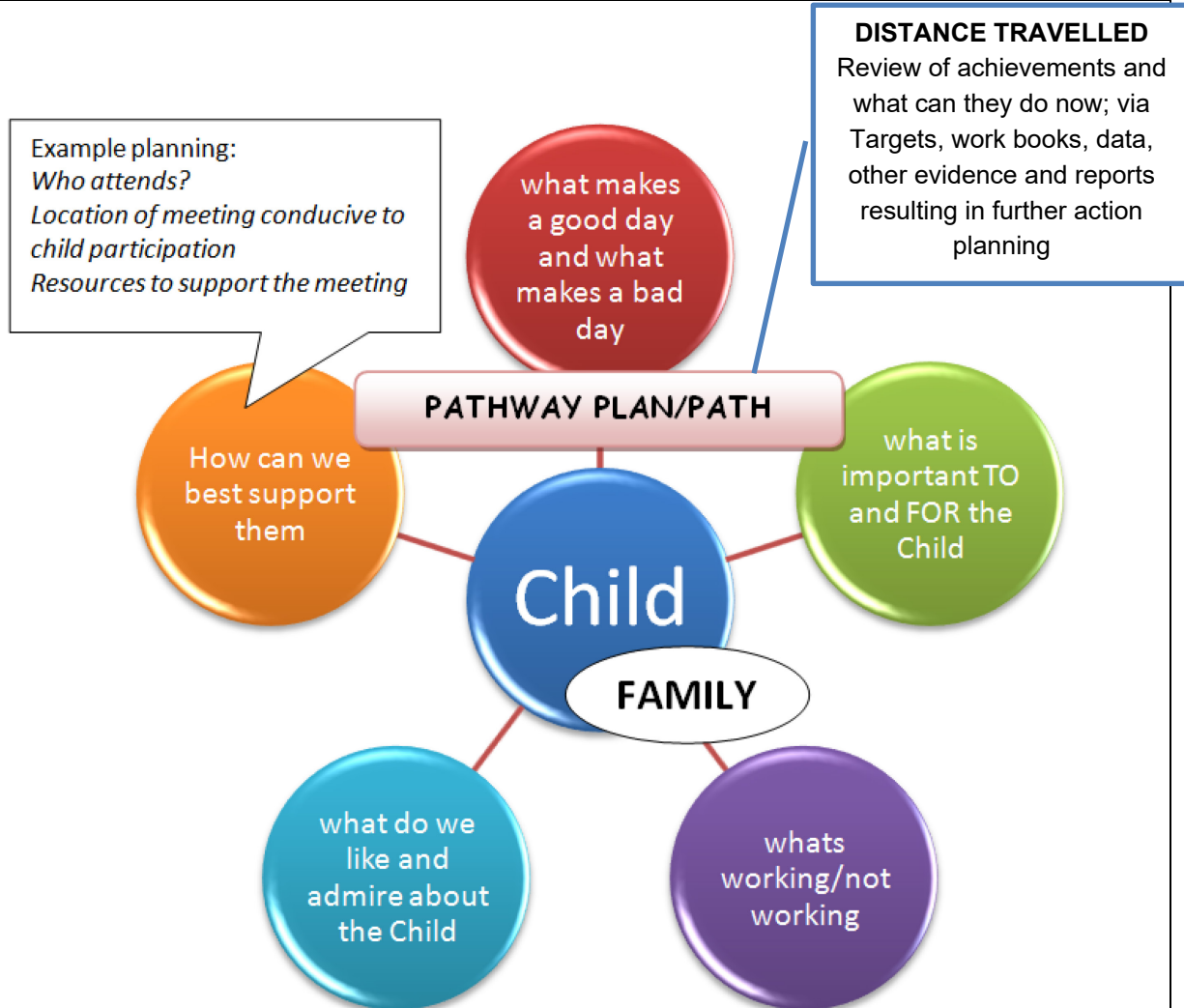
## D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets



### Annual Review through Person Centred planning PCP (Person Centred Review PCR)

The Annual Review Meeting (Attendees: Pupil/Parents/School/LA/Clinical/other professionals as needed) will take the form of a Person Centred Pathway/Review covering all aspects of the pupils educational, social and emotional development. The Person centred planning meeting will focus on what the pupil needs for the future as support, skills and knowledge that will enable them to successfully reach their aspirations. The meeting will discuss support strategies which are negotiated and agreed between service providers and service users. It will be a strong planning process that puts the person and at times their family at the centre and deliberately requires them to input. The school will have trained PCP and PCR facilitators who are accredited to support this process.

## D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets



### Parent / carer meeting as part of the Pupil Progress Cycle

A meeting with parents / carers will be held each term with teachers to discuss the holistic progress made by their child. The main focus of these meetings will be to share information and to ensure that parents understand what their child is learning and how to support their learning at home. This will include a detailed discussion about the progress which their child is making in each aspect of their holistic learning and the priorities and aspirations for the family.

### Open days

Each year the school will be open for parents and carers to join us in a typical school day. Parents and carers will have the opportunity to see the school 'at work' and be able to join in learning activities with their child.

### Telephone calls home

The school will ask parents how often they would like to be contacted via the telephone and what type of information they would like to receive over the telephone.

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

This may be particularly pertinent for pupils who have medical, complex and changing needs.

### **Home / school diaries. Planning Journal**

A simple home/ school diary will be issued which will record the activities, achievements, progress and pastoral matters which have occurred during the school day. Parents will be asked to contribute the same information to inform school the next day. Families will be able to access an e-based 'celebration wall' of achievement which will include photographs and information regarding their child's week at school.

### **Weekly letter**

The school and student council will produce a weekly/half termly newsletter which will inform families about whole school activity. This may include reporting and celebrating successes, reminders, changes to procedures etc.

### **Website**

The school website will be the central place where all information (both statutory and of interest to families) will be stored and accessible. The school website will be an invaluable communication tool, providing up to date news and resources for parents.

### **Social media**

Social media such as Twitter and Facebook will be used to inform families of upcoming events and information from other services which may be useful or of interest to our pupils and their families.

### **Text Messaging service**

The school will operate a text messaging service to ensure information is presented quickly and efficiently to parents. We will choose a system which aligns to the school information management system and enables parents to book parents' evenings, complete forms, make payments, respond to invitations and view correspondence.

**Parent Focus Groups/Parent/carer Forum** The Deputy Head will arrange Focus Groups when the school is exploring changes to policy or procedures which directly affect pupils and their families. Feedback from Focus Groups will be influential in decision making about these issues.

### **Questionnaires / on-line survey**

Each year parents will be invited to complete an anonymous satisfaction survey to evaluate the quality all aspects of the provision. The survey will focus on the school's performance in areas like, supporting pupils' progress, sharing information, keeping pupils safe and preparing them for life beyond school.

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

### **Specialist Support Team**

Workshops will be held to support families in key areas of their child's life. They will discuss and demonstrate the specialist approaches used by the school to support pupils' learning, and will give advice on how to address individual learning needs. The Specialist Support Team will include staff that are trained to deliver workshops around, such things as Autism, PDA/behaviour and social communication. They will also offer support within the family home to set up systems to support extend learning eg the TEACCH approach. Forging positive and supportive partnerships with our parents will be of upmost importance to the school. We will communicate to all staff that our parents hold key information and have a critical role to play in their pupils' development.

We will recognise that families have unique strengths, knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. From our experience in working in the field of SEND we know that the work of professionals is more effective when parents are involved and account is taken of their wishes, feelings and perspectives on their pupils' development.

**D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

If you are applying for more than one school, please provide one version of this section, referring to individual schools or circumstances where relevant.

Please:

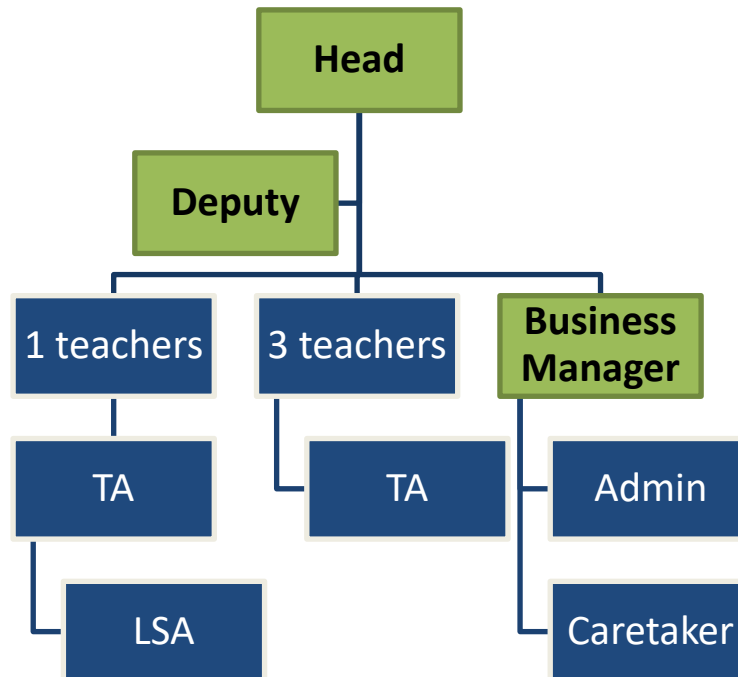
- use the space provided below; and
- refer to the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

<b>D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels</b>
<b>Staffing Structure</b> <p>The diagram that follows provides a breakdown of the proposed management structure for the school. The diagram illustrates the teams which will be in place with lines of responsibility, management and accountability. We will implement all staffing decisions based upon a Core Offer (explained further in the 'Affordability' section.). This will mean that Place Funding will facilitate the costs of the Senior and Extended leadership team, alongside ancillary staff and associated costs for buildings and running.</p>



D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels

## Discovery Academy – Staffing structure chart Yr 3 onwards (Based on SHEFFIELD pupil figures as estimations)



KEY: ■ SENIOR MANAGEMENT



**D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

**Staff roles, experience and expertise**

Level	Head	Deputy	Business Manager
Operational responsibility	Finance School improvement	Safeguarding With and through Middle leaders/ middle leaders	Business and administration management. Health and Safety
Curriculum Responsibility	Provision and strategic direction. Curriculum offer and overview.	Curriculum entitlement and coverage. Accreditation Data/Examination PCR / PCP / Annual Reviews. School Partnerships	Policy Review cycle Legal compliance E safety
Quality of Teaching and Learning (QTL)	Quality assurance. Teachers causing concern Peer review	With and through. QTL for teachers and HLTA's Progress and outcomes	Managing QTL data base and recording.
Whole School responsibility	Governance SEF and SIP NQT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision</li> </ul>	Pupil premium & Yr7 SEF evidence files grant review Pathways Clinical liaison/MDT	Budget monitoring Grants Staffing and Workforce development
Whole school safeguarding responsibility	Overall safeguarding	DSL Pupil Voice	Health and safety Risk assessment

Middle Leadership/Dept Leads with UPS will take on board curriculum area responsibility inc

LAC/Curriculum planning/Subject areas

The school will agree several services from external providers through Service Level Agreements (SLA) during the early stages of opening. All SLA agreements will follow a Best Value scrutiny process. The services will include:

- Catering
- Cleaning
- ICT support

### **D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

- Clinical and other professional input through local agreement/procurement with SHEFFIELD and local authorities, for example
- Educational Psychology
- Speech and Language Therapy

This needs to remain flexible to pupil need which may change.

#### **SLT Roles**

Members of the Senior Leadership Team will work together to ensure the Quality of Provision and delivery of the Vision at Discovery Academy. Each role within the SLT will have specific responsibilities for operational matters, overseeing the quality of the curriculum and levels of personalisation, Quality of Teaching and Learning, whole school responsibilities and safeguarding. The team will collectively evaluate outcomes and complete self-evaluation. This will enable them to identify priorities through the School Development Plan.

#### **Head**

The Head will take the lead role in ensuring the strategic direction of the school.

The Head will lead Quality Assurance through ensuring internal scrutiny of outcomes and seeking external scrutiny, commissioning reviews around specific aspects of the schools work. They will be responsible for establishing effective collaborative practice between the school's professional teams and training and supporting all members of staff. It will be important that the Head is able to place pupils and their families at the centre of all decision making. The Head (with support from the Deputy) will create and forge new partnerships with other schools and providers and seek to influence commissioners from Health, Social Care and Education to ensure that the complex needs of the pupils are met appropriately.

The Head will offer Supervision and mentoring to any members of the Senior Leadership Team so that dedicated, quality time is provided for professional discussion. Within the first two years of opening, it will be necessary to cover any longer term absence of the Headteacher through redeployment of a Senior Leader from the Trust / promoting one of the Deputy and subsequently Middle leader teachers internally in order to Deputise. In shorter term absence, the Headteacher and / or the Trust Improvement Lead will be 'on call'.

#### **Deputy Head**

The Deputy Head will work with and through the Dept leads to ensure the Quality of Provision. They will oversee the curriculum, recording, data & assessment and Inter-agency working. The Deputy Head will undertake and facilitate the Person Centred

### **D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

Planning and Reviews. The Deputy Head will forge positive links with all key stakeholders in order to undertake their Designated Safeguarding Lead role robustly and holding effective communication as a key aspect of the role. They will take full responsibility for the smooth running of the school in the absence of the Head.

#### **Business Manager**

The School Business Manager will work closely with the Head to make sure that the school's budget and resources are consistently monitored and used in the most efficient way. They will be responsible for:

- Reporting budget monitoring information.
- Exploring best value and reducing costs
- Commissioning internal and external audit
- Managing lettings
- Workforce development inc Recruiting, training and managing school staff
- Managing school building maintenance
- Handling contracts and tenders for services; cleaning, catering and ICT
- Being responsible for security and health and safety on school premises
- Managing the school's administrative systems and personnel,
- Preparing information and reports.

The Business Manager will be closely involved in leadership activities and strategic decision making as part of the School Self Evaluation and School Development Planning processes.

#### **Middle Leadership.**

Middle Leaders will include teachers who have a Subject Responsibility for the Core National Curriculum Subjects and Leaders of specific teams of people such as those with responsibilities for Therapy coordination/Specialist Support Team Leading.

The staff member responsible for Therapy coordination will have specific responsibility for ensuring that the therapeutic needs of pupils are understood and met through working with class teams and visiting professionals.

The specialist Support Team leader will be responsible for receiving referrals, observation, allocating support team members, monitoring progress and impact of intervention work.

The Business Manager will provide Data and Systems support for each of the Middle (and Senior) leaders to ensure electronic reporting; monitoring and database structures and systems are fit for purpose.

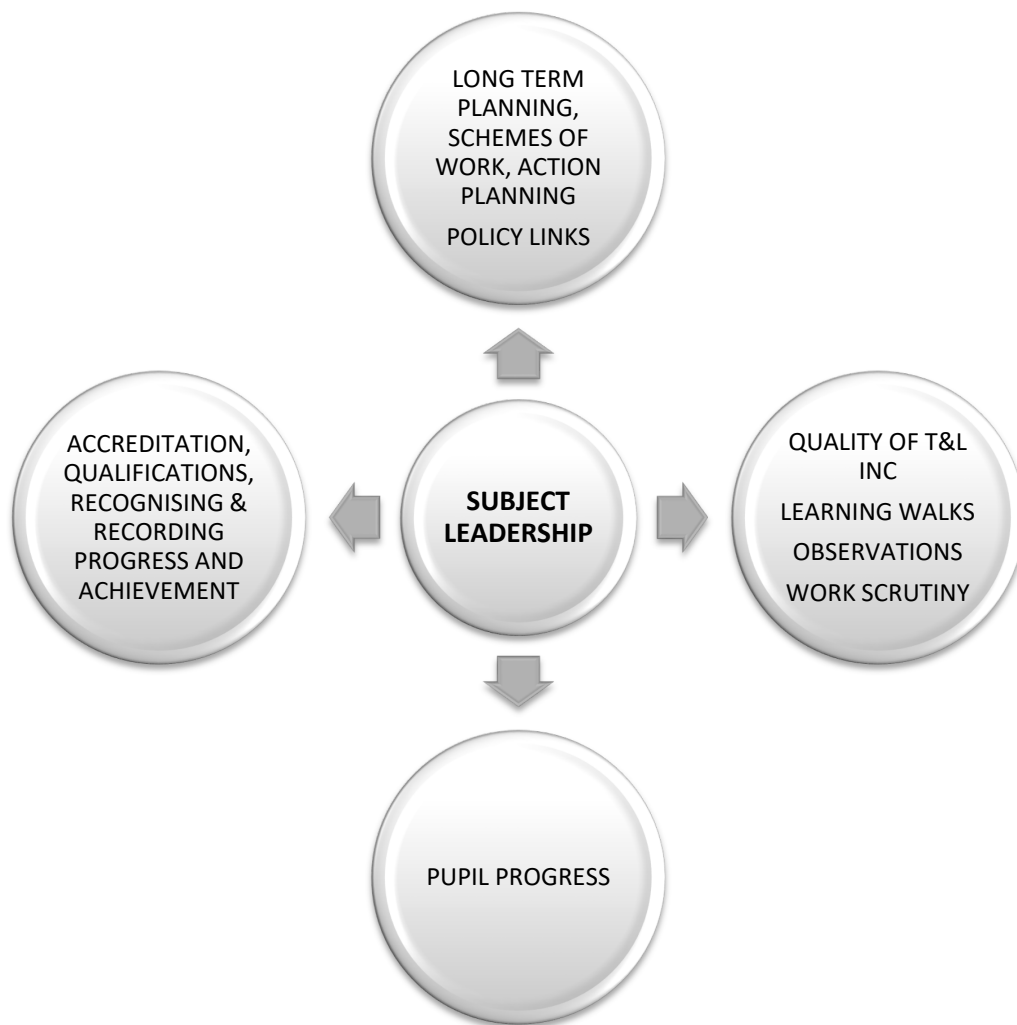
**D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

The Accreditation and Qualification lead will work alongside the Deputy Head to ensure that the operational functions are complete by the timescales.

Middle Leaders will meet with the Deputy Head each week.

**Subject Leadership**

All teachers employed at the school will be expected to undertake the leadership and co-ordination of a subject or group of subjects. Teachers employed on the Upper Pay Spine will undertake the leadership of Core Subjects. Alongside oversight from the SLT leaders, Subject Leaders will be responsible for the following activities:



Subject Leaders will meet with the Deputy Head at least once every half term to discuss their work and agree next steps.

The Senior Leaders and Specialist Support Team will meet every week to discuss individual pupils who are facing barriers to learning and to offer a cohesive package of Early Intervention.

### **D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

If Early Intervention is not successful then these cases will be escalated through half termly Case Management Meetings. At these meetings all visiting professionals will be invited to discuss specific cases and their barriers through collaborative Health, social care and education perspectives.

Classroom teachers will lead members of their class team and have responsibility for the deployment of their staff to ensure that pupils are able to access their learning and understand the learning targets. Class teachers will meet weekly with a member of the Senior Leadership team to discuss both 'whats worked well and even better if'.

#### **Residential/Boarding Provision**

It is anticipated that 4-6 residential placements will be catered for through the Discovery Academy boarding provision for children identified as requiring this level of support and 24 hour curriculum input. The children living in residence will access the appropriate part of the school curriculum in line with their learning pathway

Below is a proposed staffing structure for the boarding arm of the school. This is by no means an exhausted structure as SCC have been very open about their want to co-produce this offer. In principle the ratio is 2:1 (two children or young people to one member of staff) but this is a flexible model and in line with Guidance "Chapter 4 of the regulations – Staffing". During any pre placement assessment process consideration will be given to the child and young person's presenting needs, and at times of transition this can mean some children and young people may need additional support during this period or in some cases longer term. All this will be agreed as part of the placement offer, and additional resources will need to be funded in addition to the core placement costs.

The staff team needs to be flexible and this is offered by working in partnership with the school staff should the young person be attending school, which would be a model of good practice as this would allow for continuity of care for the young people while also reducing the need for zero hours or agency staff.

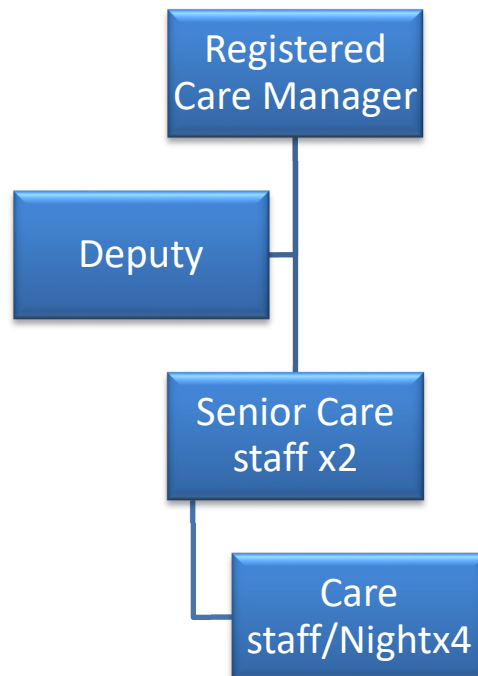
For the level of skills required by staff we will follow the Ofsted guide to Children's Homes Standards

- Guidance Chapter 3 of the regulations - Registered Persons
- Guidance Chapter 4 of the regulations – Staffing
- Appendix A Qualifications of staff working in children's homes: Manager and Staff.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/463220/Guide\\_to\\_Children\\_s\\_Home\\_Standards\\_inc\\_quality\\_standards\\_Version\\_1.17\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/463220/Guide_to_Children_s_Home_Standards_inc_quality_standards_Version_1.17_FINAL.pdf)

### D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels

In addition to this the Trust will ensure staff are either recruited with the relevant training and skills in complex needs, such as training in ASC, which meets the requirements of their post.



Sheffield City Council has already published their plans for the funding of Discovery Academy based on [REDACTED] place funding which will be paid to the school directly via the ESFA, together with additional Top Up/Element 3 funding of between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. For the budget preparation, we have assumed a Top Up/Element 3 funding agreement of [REDACTED] for primary pupils and [REDACTED] for secondary pupils.

The Place funding of [REDACTED] per pupil will be allocated to the school infrastructures. This will cover costs including:

- Buildings,
- Premises,
- Utilities,
- SLT,
- Business manager and administration,
- Ancillary staff.
- Curriculum Development



**D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

- School Improvement.

The Top Up Base funding of either [REDACTED] per pupil will fund teaching teams.

**Flexibility of Boarding Provision**

The Boarding Provision will generate income based on the following:

- Short Breaks offer to parents/carers in conjunction with social care
- Holiday Programmes for school holidays
- Emergency same day placements

## **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- refer to the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

Discovery Academy will play its part in helping all pupils to become members of a welcoming and cohesive community. In the United Kingdom, our population has an increasing rich diversity of backgrounds, origins, beliefs and cultures. We will help all to belong and to feel equally valued as members of our school and as citizens and residents of this country. As professionals working within the field of Special Education we recognise that society is enriched and enhanced by diversity.

Nexus MAT is opposed to all forms of discrimination based on a person's ethnic origin, class, religion, nationality, age, gender, disability, ability or sexuality. We collectively (staff and governors) work towards ensuring that our practices both inside and outside the classroom are anti-discriminatory with regard to our interactions with everyone in the school community. All staff and governors will promote equal opportunities and inclusion. Our collective efforts, supported by visitors, parents and carers, will help to ensure that all our pupils and their families are valued and treated equally. At Nexus MAT we strive to have school communities where everyone is valued equally because of their individual differences.

All incidents of racial discrimination will be recorded and action will be taken to address the particular incident and underlying issues. Parents and carers will be regarded as partners in this and will help us work individually with pupils. The curriculum offer will support multi-culturalism and diversity and all resources used will reflect our own community and the wider community, underpinned by a shared understanding of British Values.

#### **Personal, Social, Emotional Development inc PSHE**

Alongside academic achievement, the school will place great emphasis on pupils' personal and social development. Opportunities to develop functional language and social communication skills will be offered throughout the school day.

Personal, Social, Health Economics Education (PSHE) is a valuable part of the majority of activities during the school day and for those children boarding; including break times, dinner times and group activities. The curriculum helps prepare pupils to develop as individuals within the wider community. Pupils learn to understand

#### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

themselves physically, emotionally and sexually and begin to understand their relationships with others.

All pupils will participate in a broad and balanced PSHE and Citizenship curriculum, which meets their individual needs. Pupils boarding will have this integrated into their 24 hour curriculum. Its role contributes towards students developing knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and values which are necessary for them to make sense of the responsibilities, opportunities and experiences which are part of their lives, now and in the future.

Social, emotional aspects of Learning and mental health will be taught through the PSHE curriculum to develop self-awareness, knowledge and understanding; however, with the designation of this Discovery Academy and subsequently due to the nature of the assigned complex needs, numerous pupils (such as SEMH for example) will require additional support/personalised intervention within this area with a trained professionals such as a clinical psychologist.

PSHE will consist of two strands; the taught curriculum based upon National frameworks and Personal, Social, Emotional Development (PSED) taught implicitly through the ethos of the school. Students will learn about others around them, citizenship and careers education through the PSHE schemes of work. The PSHE curriculum incorporates Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in the latter Key stages, giving opportunity for transference of learning into the extended day/boarding provision. In PSED they learn about themselves and develop skills such as working with others, Personal care routines, making choices and daily tasks.

#### **Curriculum Organisation:**

Every pupil will have a learning pathway containing a PSHE and SRE developmental curriculum section to record their progress in aspects, such as:

- Being safe
- Planning for the future
- Basic safety advice
- Road safety/ community
- Enterprise
- Employment
- Bullying
- Personal finance
- Taking responsibility
- Drug awareness
- Healthy eating/ lifestyle
- Changing body/puberty
- Feelings

#### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

- Body
- STD
- Relationships
- Being safe/saying no
- Self esteem

The curriculum will allow for a personalised approach for all so that pupils can learn about topics at their own pace with some key focus areas that maybe needed (for example: developing greater awareness of emotions/facial expression). Students also have extra time on PSD elements of the curriculum, for example during break times, lunchtimes, form times and assembly. Examples include: independence, choice making, problem solving, working with others and improving own learning and performance, personal care, using their voice and influence.

The Trust as a Single Equalities Policy which outlines the Trust-wide approach to ensuring equality for all, under the one umbrella including:

- Race
- Disability
- Gender & gender reassignment
- Age
- Religion & Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Special Educational Need
- Community cohesion

Inclusiveness is at the heart of our equality plans and we are keen to ensure that we are an inclusive organisation that supports and promotes “Equality for All” within our own and the wider community. We therefore welcome the Equalities duties of schools.

The purpose of our Single Equalities Policy is to show how our Trust promotes equality for disabled pupils, staff, parents and the wider community. We believe in treating everyone fairly and we are committed to creating an environment in our schools which is appropriate and accessible to all.

We aim to encourage and listen to local views and involve local people in the work of our schools. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school communities working together - pupils, staff, governors, and parents / careers. All

#### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

school staff and members of the school community have a responsibility to treat everyone fairly and to promote arrangements for people with disabilities.

#### **Religious Education**

Religious Education will be provided using aspects of both the SHEFFIELD scheme and Nexus model operating throughout our schools in order to reflect the faiths of the diverse community that the school is part of.

At Discovery Academy, Religious Education will be a component of a broad and balanced education and enables pupils to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The main aims will be

- To develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in the UK.
- To show respect for people who hold views and beliefs different from our own.
- To develop an understanding of the beliefs and values of individuals, communities, societies and cultures.
- To develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues.

Within the Curriculum there will be 2 main objectives – learning about religion and beliefs and learning from religion and beliefs

*Learning about* - Opportunities to gather information and develop knowledge about beliefs, teachings, practices, ways of life of the religions studied.

*Learning from* – Opportunities to reflect and respond and to communicate about life experiences.

A balance between the two will ensure that R.E is relevant to pupils own personal development and offers opportunities to:

- develop self-confidence and awareness by providing opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.
- develop positive attitudes towards others, respecting their beliefs and experience
- reflect on and consider their own values and those of others including issues of right and wrong.

#### **The R.E Curriculum**

Pupils will follow an R.E. syllabus as set out in the Scheme of Work and will be principally taught through discrete lessons. However, there are close links with other

#### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

areas of the curriculum notably communication, PSHE and Citizenship, which enhances and reinforces the breadth of study.

Work in RE includes the use of a wide range of information, including the local environment, artefacts, pictures, photographs and videos, books and buildings, and people talking about their experience of religions. Pupils have opportunities to use stories and poems, music, dance, drama, art and ICT where appropriate in their learning.

The school strives to build a community which encourages all its members to develop a healthy respect for each other. In addition, we provide a happy, stimulating and caring environment where there are opportunities, encouragement and stimuli to develop each student to their full potential through:

- Ensuring that there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all as a part of our school and local community.
- Helping pupils and all in our school appreciate and value the wide range of diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances.
- Learning about our nation's history, culture, traditions and its developing and changing nature.
- Developing an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen of the United Kingdom.
- Ensuring that all are treated fairly and equally and given similar life opportunities.
- Ensuring that strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in school and the communities which we serve.

All stakeholders expected to support and be engaged in the implementation of these aims through every engagement that they have with each other; in tutor time, assemblies and in the course of daily interactions (with each other) in their classes and outside classrooms to promote and celebrate the equality and diversity of the school community.

#### **SMSC**

Within the ethos of the school and the taught curriculum we will utilise English, PSHE, Religious Education and Citizenship lessons to develop their Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural understanding (SMSC).

*Spiritual Development* will be developed through opportunities to:

- \* Develop their self-esteem, self-knowledge and belief in themselves
- \* Engage in activities that encourage listening, reflecting, puzzling and searching for the truth.
- \* Develop their personal beliefs and values based on a sense of curiosity and respect towards their own and others beliefs

#### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

- \* Reflect on and discuss what they have achieved and what they need to do to be successful in the future
- \* Enjoy exploring diversity and difference

*Cultural Development* will be developed through opportunities to:

- \* Recognise similarities and differences and promote equality
- \* Recognise and nurture particular gifts and talents; providing opportunities for pupils to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events.
- \* Broaden, develop and enrich their interests and insights through interacting with opportunities the school and the wider community provides.
- \* Explore, appreciate, understand and respect aspects of their own and other cultural environments in terms of beliefs, values, attitudes, customs, knowledge and skills.

*Moral Development* will be developed through opportunities to:

- \* Agree, understand and follow codes of conduct and class rules that are displayed in the classroom.
- \* Celebrate success and reward expressions of moral good behaviour and insight
- \* Explore and develop moral concepts such as: truth, justice, right, wrong and equal opportunities
- \* Fundraise for local, national and international charities.
- \* Take responsibility for their actions. For example, respect for property, care of the environment, developing codes of conduct.

*Social Development* will be developed through opportunities to:

- \* Maintain and develop relationships within the school working successfully with their students and adults in the school community.
- \* Reflect on their own contribution to society
- \* Gain an understanding of the wider society through their family and carers, the school, local and wider communities
- \* Respond to the opportunities being offered, to show initiative and to take responsibility for their own learning in the school community.
- \* Actively participate in the school community and beyond into the wider community outside of school.

#### **British Values**

Discovery Academy will promote British Values through developing knowledge, skills and understanding in:

*Democracy.*

- School council will be nominated through an election in each key stage.
- Pupils will have their voices heard through school council and Communication Groups.

#### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

- Pupils will be nominated for Special mentions in assembly.

##### *The rule of law.*

- Pupils will be rewarded for following school rules.
- They are encouraged at all times to promote good behaviour.
- Visits will be arranged to support the curriculum themes by the police, fire service, Mayor etc.
- Pupils will be explicitly taught the value and reasons for laws. The responsibility that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken.
- To implement Restorative Justice practices.

##### *Individual Liberty.*

- The school will actively encourage and expect pupils to make choices i.e., through lunchtime / enrichment activity choices, Person Centred Planning meetings, vocational and enterprise lessons.
- It will provide boundaries for pupils.
- Pupils will be encouraged to know their own rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely i.e., E-Safety.

#### **Prevent**

Alongside the SMSC, PSHE, Citizenship curriculum, all staff undertake appropriate training that equips them with the skills to identify and respond appropriately to concerns regarding extremism and radicalisation. Including spotting any changes, extreme views or concerning signs regarding faith / ideology or personal, emotional or social issues within the child's life, community or family.

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

Assess the risk of pupils being drawn into extremist views. The risk assessment will include consideration of the school's curriculum, the use of school premises by external agencies and any other local issues relating to the school community.

- Ensure that a broad curriculum is in place to deliver the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Ensure pupils are given the skills to make informed choices for their own well being
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place by working in partnership with other agencies and communities as required.
- Ensure there are systems in place for keeping pupils safe from extremist material when accessing the internet in our school by using effective filtering and usage policies

#### **Safeguarding**



#### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

The Headteacher and Designated lead will ensure that the school has and shares, policies regarding all facets of Safeguarding. The school will produce information for parents to ensure that parents are clear regarding the schools procedures where there are safeguarding concerns. Pupils in the school may not be able to understand or inform of any abuse which is happening to them and therefore staff will need a robust understanding of the signs and indicators.

The school will have a robust system in place where all concerns are recorded and entered electronically upon an electronic system. This will trigger a communication to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher who will respond as a priority and record any subsequent actions. .

All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets. The adults will endeavour to support the child to understand what they will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose.

Throughout our curriculum we will provide activities and opportunities for pupils to develop the skills they need to identify risks and stay safe.

We acknowledge the important role that the curriculum can play in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of our pupils for the responsibilities of adult life and citizenship. It is expected that all subject leaders, including subject leadership for PSHE, will consider the opportunities that exist in their subject area for promoting the welfare and safety of pupils. As appropriate, the curriculum will be used to build resilience, help pupils to keep safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, pupils will be taught;

- To recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly;
- To judge what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable;
- To recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being; including knowing when/where to get help;
- Emotional literacy to be able to communicate their worries and concerns.

#### **E Safety**

The internet has become so well integrated into all our lives that we need to support our pupils to identify and deal with the risks of on-line activity. For someone with complex needs, it can be even harder to identify and deal with risks. From the perspective of a young person with such needs, online activity can be a positive

**D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

experience as they can find other people who relate to their difficulties, share their interests and escape from the pressures of life.

There are numerous risks around pupils or vulnerable people using the internet, and it is important that our PSHE, E Safety and ICT curriculum helps to mitigate them.

Five risk areas which are particularly relevant to pupils in Discovery Academy would include difficulties with social interactions, misunderstandings/lack of theory of mind, obsessiveness, bullying, and money issues.

We will offer specific teaching sessions to pupils and parents which will address these areas and offer best practice advice.

All of the staff will be fully trained and competent in all above areas and this training will be refreshed over a 1-3 year rolling programme.

Discovery Academy will follow the Safeguarding procedures currently in place in our other schools and alongside those of associated partners such as the local secondary where partnership and joint programmes operate. The Headteacher of the school and the Deputy will be trained to the highest level in safeguarding. Overall responsibility for this will rest with the Headteacher, monitored by Governors and the Trust Executive. All staff will all undergo training annually, in line with the Local Safeguarding Pupils Board requirements.

## Section E – Evidence of consultation and demand

### E1 - Provide valid evidence of appropriate engagement with parents for pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Please:

- use the space provided below;
- include evidence as annexes; and
- refer to the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

#### **E1 – Provide valid evidence of appropriate engagement with parents for pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan**

The business case outlining the need for this new provision has been developed by Sheffield City Council and agreed by the Department for Education as part of the initial EOI application process. As per the Inclusion Strategy Update report to Sheffield Schools Forum on 27 September 2017, SCC have examples of changing patterns in need/demand: rise in Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASC) alongside a rise in the proportion of ASC pupils who are placed in a Special School; high proportion of children with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs placed in special school. Discovery Academy will play a key role in helping SCC meet it's inclusion strategy priority which outlines that "the number and/or the cost of Independent Specialist Placements – Must Reduce: Although we benchmark favourably against national comparators for the number of ISP placements the cost of independent specialist placements is increasing and we continue to contest placements at tribunal."

We have deliberately opted to not consult further with parents or carers on demand for the free school, as the Local Authority have undertaken this and as commissioner we recognise their prerogative in this regard and respect their knowledge and understanding of their commissioning needs. Typically for a mainstream free school application it would be necessary to evidence need but this route is LA led and each LA has had to evidentially detail its sufficiency needs and how their request to open a free special school relates to this. It is, in our view, unhelpful to seek to consult on this further as this could – if not done with the LA –undermine both the LA and Nexus MAT and potentially create competing demands. Any consultation should and would be agreed and done jointly between Nexus MAT and the LA after the Trust has been awarded the contract to open this Free School.

As part of our pre-opening strategy, we will develop and publish an engagement plan. We will work closely with the Sheffield Parent/Carer Forum to ensure that we use their established networks to directly engage with families of children with SEND. The principal designate will be asked to attend Headteacher briefings facilitated by

**E1 – Provide valid evidence of appropriate engagement with parents for pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan**

the Local Authority and/or Learn Sheffield so that they can engage with the wider schools leadership community and to also ensure that other schools are aware of who they are. It would also be expected of the Principal Designate that they attend the Special Heads meetings once appointed, to ensure they work collaboratively with their peers in the SEND sector (LA maintained, independent and academies).

We also seek to engage directly with the local parish council in the locality the school is situated so that we have direct liaison with the local community, accepting though that the community the schools serves will be wider than one community (and indeed, one authority area).

We will use translation services and other adapted methods of communication to ensure that what we publish is as accessible as possible to a wide range of individuals.

A school website and social media profile will be developed as a matter of urgency once the contract has been awarded, with key information about the developing school published online and updated regularly. A regular newsletter will be published (monthly) to keep stakeholders informed. This will be a one page summary keeping any and all interested parties updated on the development of the pre-opening phase. By working closely with the Local Authority, the Trust will also have the advantage of drawing on their expertise of managing communications and accessing local and national media outlets.

As commissioner, the local authority will have information on potential children and families who they wish to place at the free school and Nexus will therefore work closely with the LA to arrange consultation and communication fora for these stakeholders. This will include holding open sessions in the new school building and consulting on a range of matters (such a school uniform, badge, school day, etc) prior to parent governors being appointed.

Whilst the Principal Designate will be the ambassador-in-chief for Discovery Academy, the Nexus MAT Chief Executive Officer and trustees will also directly engage with children and families in systematic manner (via some of the routes outlined above) to ensure that their voice is heard and has influence.

The Trust has also developed a mock prospectus for Discovery Academy and this will be refined and published as early as possible to ensure that families and commissioners have all the key information about the school prior to opening. As with other Nexus academies, our pupil and family voice will play a central role in all our published materials post-opening.

Please tick to confirm that you have provided evidence as annexes:

## Section F – capacity and capability

### F1 (a) Skills and experience of your team

Please refer to the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

- Tell us **who (a named individual) is in charge** during pre-opening and provide their CV.
- provide a short commentary on your plans to manage the pre-opening project.

You must complete a separate line for each member. Please identify individuals who will be company members, trustees, the chair of trustees, members of the pre-opening team and if applicable, the local governing body, including the chair if they have been identified.

Name	Where they live (town/city)	Role(s) (pre-opening team, member, trustee, principal designate, local governor once school is open)	Summary of relevant expertise Please refer to the relevant section of the assessment criteria booklet to check what detail you need to give	Available Time (hours per week)
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]







Name	Where they live (town/city)	Role(s) (pre-opening team, member, trustee, principal designate, local governor once school is open)	Summary of relevant expertise Please refer to the relevant section of the assessment criteria booklet to check what detail you need to give	Available Time (hours per week)
			[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Name	Where they live (town/city)	Role(s) (pre-opening team, member, trustee, principal designate, local governor once school is open)	Summary of relevant expertise Please refer to the relevant section of the assessment criteria booklet to check what detail you need to give	Available Time (hours per week)
			[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]



Name	Where they live (town/city)	Role(s) (pre-opening team, member, trustee, principal designate, local governor once school is open)	Summary of relevant expertise Please refer to the relevant section of the assessment criteria booklet to check what detail you need to give	Available Time (hours per week)
			[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

Name	Where they live (town/city)	Role(s) (pre-opening team, member, trustee, principal designate, local governor once school is open)	Summary of relevant expertise Please refer to the relevant section of the assessment criteria booklet to check what detail you need to give	Available Time (hours per week)
			<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
<p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	











Name	Where they live (town/city)	Role(s) (pre-opening team, member, trustee, principal designate, local governor once school is open)	Summary of relevant expertise Please refer to the relevant section of the assessment criteria booklet to check what detail you need to give	Available Time (hours per week)
			<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 100%; min-height: 150px;"></div>	

[Add lines as appropriate]

## **F1 (a) Skills and experience of your team**

Nexus MAT will appoint a project board to oversee the development and delivery of Discovery Academy from receiving confirmation of this application being successful throughout the entirety of the pre-opening phase. Membership of the project board will be drawn from the Trustees of the MAT and other key stakeholders (as per the table above) as well as those areas identified in the gap analysis (F1b). The remit of the project board will be to sanction decision making and liaise with the project manager, SCC and the Education & Skills Funding Agency.

The Trust executive officers (CEO, CFO and School Improvement Lead) will support the work of the volunteers populating the project board, and the Principal Designate will be accountable to this group as the local governance board for the pre-opening phase. This project board will ensure that Discovery Academy opens in line with the expressed education vision as per this application. It will meet at least monthly though may adopt a more regular meeting schedule if required. The project board will hold similar duties to a local governing body, in line with the Trust's scheme of delegation.

Where necessary, associate members of this board can and will be appointed to respond to emergent need. SCC will also be offered associate membership of the board to enable as much co-production of provision as possible.

The Principal designate will be appointed as soon as is possible and will be the responsible senior manager for the free school, utilising support from the wider trust (HR, finance, facilities management etc.) where they require additional input or expertise.

The Trust has already approached the Sheffield Parent/Carer Forum at the market engagement event on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017 to invite a representative from their organisation onto the pre-opening board. The representative present expressed interest in taking up the offer of membership if Nexus are successful.

The timeline for recruitment is estimated as follows:

- **1-4 months following confirmation of successful application:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] and commence the pre-opening of Discovery Academy in line with the detail included in this application form (this individual was the lead for developing this application). However, the Trust will also seek to work with the LA and members of the pre-opening Board to recruit a permanent Principal Designate. The advert will be placed on local council

### **F1 (a) Skills and experience of your team**

websites and also in the Times Ed Supplement. The Trust already has a solid network of special school contacts and this will also be utilised to promote the vacancy.

- **12 months prior to opening** - : Commencement in post of Interim Principal Designate (on 2-3 days per week) with recruitment undertaken for Principal Designate. To attract a quality candidate, a full time role will be advertised with the remaining days of their work focusing on Nexus MAT schools improvement activity, research enquiry and partnerships. The Principal Designate will also commence recruitment for employed staff of Discovery Academy and refine the leadership model;
- **6 months prior to opening**: Commencement in post of permanent Principal Designate (on 2-4 days per week) to complete appointments of other senior staff and wider staffing structure, including development and delivery of pre-opening training;
- **Opening**: Assumes full time responsibilities for open school in line with phased approach to building numbers.

**F1 (b) Skills gap analysis** Please set out any skills gaps that you think exist within your group and how you intend to fill them:

- complete the table below; and
- refer to the [how to apply to set up a free school guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

<b>Skills/experience missing</b>	<b>Where is the gap?</b> i.e. pre-opening team, trustees, local governing body	<b>How and when do you plan to fill the gap</b>
Principal designate	Pre-opening/project board	Appointment will be made upon successful approval of Free School application. Nexus MAT has a strategic development lead with NPQH and Headship experience who can be deployed in the interim to lead on pre-opening.
Chair of LGB	Local Governing Body	Chair of the project board will convert to LGB chair upon opening for the short term (first 6-12 months) before appointing a longer-term LGB chair with a separation of Trustee/LGB chair role, as part of transition plan developed by the CEO.
Capital projects	Pre-opening/project board	Recruitment of a member of the project board will be given priority for an individual with specific skills and experience around capital projects.
Local Authority Rep	Pre-opening/project board	LA officer to be appointed following confirmation of Nexus being appointment as successful sponsor.
Parent/carer voice	Pre-opening/project board	Approach already made to local Parent Forum and offer of a place on the board will be issued following confirmation of Nexus being

Skills/experience missing	Where is the gap? i.e. pre-opening team, trustees, local governing body	How and when do you plan to fill the gap
		appointment as successful sponsor.

## **F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**

Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- refer [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

### **F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**

Nexus Multi Academy Trust is a sponsor MAT with 4 constituent academies based in the South Yorkshire area. 3 of the schools in the Trust were graded as “Good” in the last Ofsted inspections:

- Hilltop School - Jan 2013
- Kelford School - Jan 2015
- Abbey School - May 2016

The fourth school (Pennine View) sponsored in April 2017. The 4 schools in the Trust all have a special educational needs designation: two are classified as being schools for children and young people aged 2 – 19 with “severe learning difficulties”, and the other two are for children aged 7 – 16 with “moderate learning difficulties”.

Nexus Multi Academy Trust has the highest ambitions possible for anyone and everyone we work with.

The vision for Nexus is that we are constantly “**Learning together; to be the best we can be.**”

Our vision is what we aspire for and is as relatable to every employee and partner of our Trust as it is to our children, young adults and their families.

In order to achieve our vision, we have the following mission statement:

- **Our learners and their families are at the centre of what we do;** empowered to learn and achieve; valued within our and their communities as visible, resilient, active and responsible citizens.
- **Our employees and partners are passionate about being the best that they can be;** providing opportunities for enriched learning and pathways to employment and independence.
- **Our Trust is relentlessly focused on improvement;** it values and celebrates success and builds partnerships to develop personalised provision with and for those we serve.

## **F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**

Underpinning our vision and mission statement are our core values. These have been defined by our workforce and governors and resonate with the values that all partners of Nexus hold.

We believe it is really important and that we are, in all the things we plan and do: **Inclusive; Child Centred; Family Focused; Caring; Passionate; Nurturing; Encouraging; Enriching and Empowering.**

We bring these high expectations to everything we do, and these are as applicable to a special school setting as much as they are to a mainstream one.

We have a published strategic plan which outlines our growth and development ambitions for the next 5 years. One of these explicitly relates to opening new, free school provision, with our strategic plan detailing what success looks like. Our 7 strategic priorities as a Trust are:

1. Increasing quality of provision from all our schools;
2. Sponsoring and improving schools in need of help and support;
3. Developing new partnerships;
4. Creating new school provision to meet emergent need;
5. Enhancing pathways for 19+ provision;
6. Establishing residential provision for our most complex pupils; and
7. Ensuring a financially viable and sustainable Multi Academy Trust.

### **Nexus MAT Leadership & Governance**

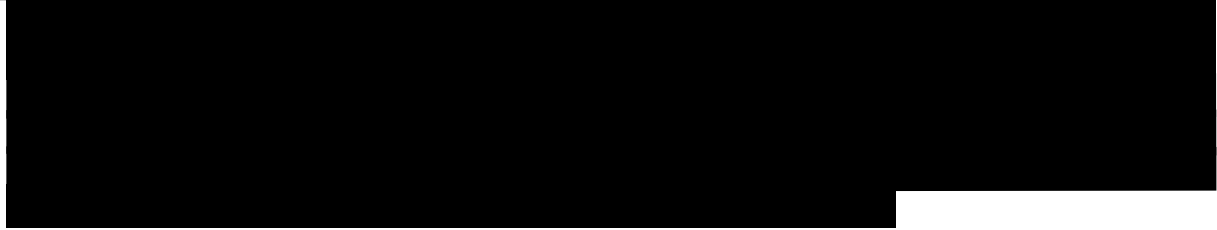
Nexus MAT has 5 Members who bring an eclectic mix of knowledge and experience to the governance of the Trust. In line with the Nexus Scheme of Delegation, Members meet at least once per year and hold responsibility for ensuring that the Chair of the Trust Board and the CEO are exercising their legal duties responsibly and effectively. Members appoint Trustees recommended by the Board, and Members endorsed the adoption of the Nexus 5 Year Strategic Plan.

Members include:

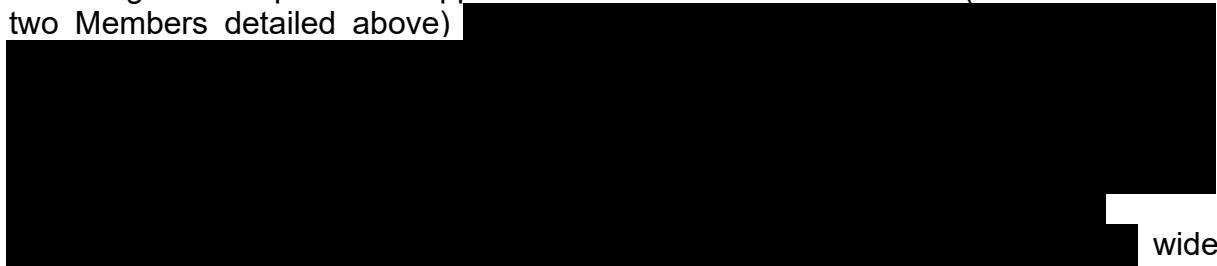




**F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**



The Nexus MAT Board of Directors has an equally diverse skills set and mix of knowledge and experience. Appointed Trustees/Directors include (in addition to the two Members detailed above)

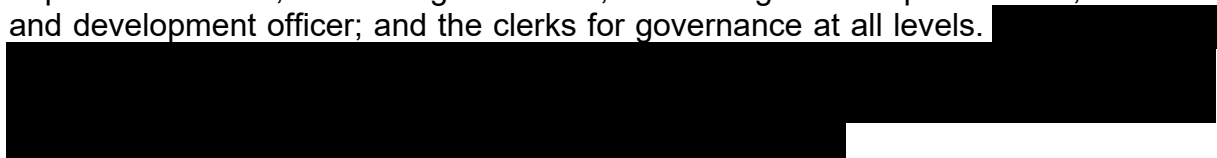


wide range of skills and knowledge in place, and we are satisfied that we have this mix to successfully oversee the opening of a free school. The Board undertake an annual self-assessment (linked to the 5 year strategic plan) to identify any gaps and respond accordingly.

The Trust is compliant with the academies financial handbook at all times, and the recently audited accounts reflect the strength of the structures, policies and procedures put in place to negate the potential for any conflict of interest. Members, Trustees and Governors are all seen as independent of the school and unable to offer services. Where there is any potential for a pecuniary interest, then this is declared and the governor in question will remove themselves from the discussion. Any concerns are raised immediately with the accounting officer, who will act quickly to address them in line with the published procedure. Spousal interest forms and connected people forms are completed prior to appointment of anyone to a governor role, and any potential conflict is reported by the clerk to the accounting officer. None have occurred since the Trust was formed. The Trust also has a clearly articulated whistleblowing policy to perpetuate a culture of openness and transparency. To date, no issues have been raised through this route. As per our most recent audited accounts, the only serving Trustee to receive any form of payment is the CEO, with this payment being his salary. The Trust operates no bonuses or gift-giving reward schemes.

In Sept 2017, Nexus MAT was awarded the National Governance Association's "Outstanding Governance" Award, in recognition of the structures and processes the Trust has established and operates.

The Central Trust employs the CEO; the Chief Finance Officer; the School Improvement Lead; the Strategic ICT lead; the Strategic Development Lead; a finance and development officer; and the clerks for governance at all levels.



**F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Each academy has its own Local Governing Body which is accountable to the Trust Board and the accounting officer, as per the published scheme of delegation. Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) have retained the majority of responsibilities that were held by LA maintained governors to ensure that Headteachers are challenged and supported by a group of volunteers who understand the specific context and character of the school. The central MAT provides governor support and development. Sitting between the LGBs and the Trust Board are 3 committees: the Audit and Finance Committee (which also carries the brief for risk management); the Standards Committee (which oversees educational standards on behalf of the Trust Board at all Nexus academies); and the Headteacher & LGB Chairs Advisory Committee. Both trustees and local governors constitute the membership of these committees.

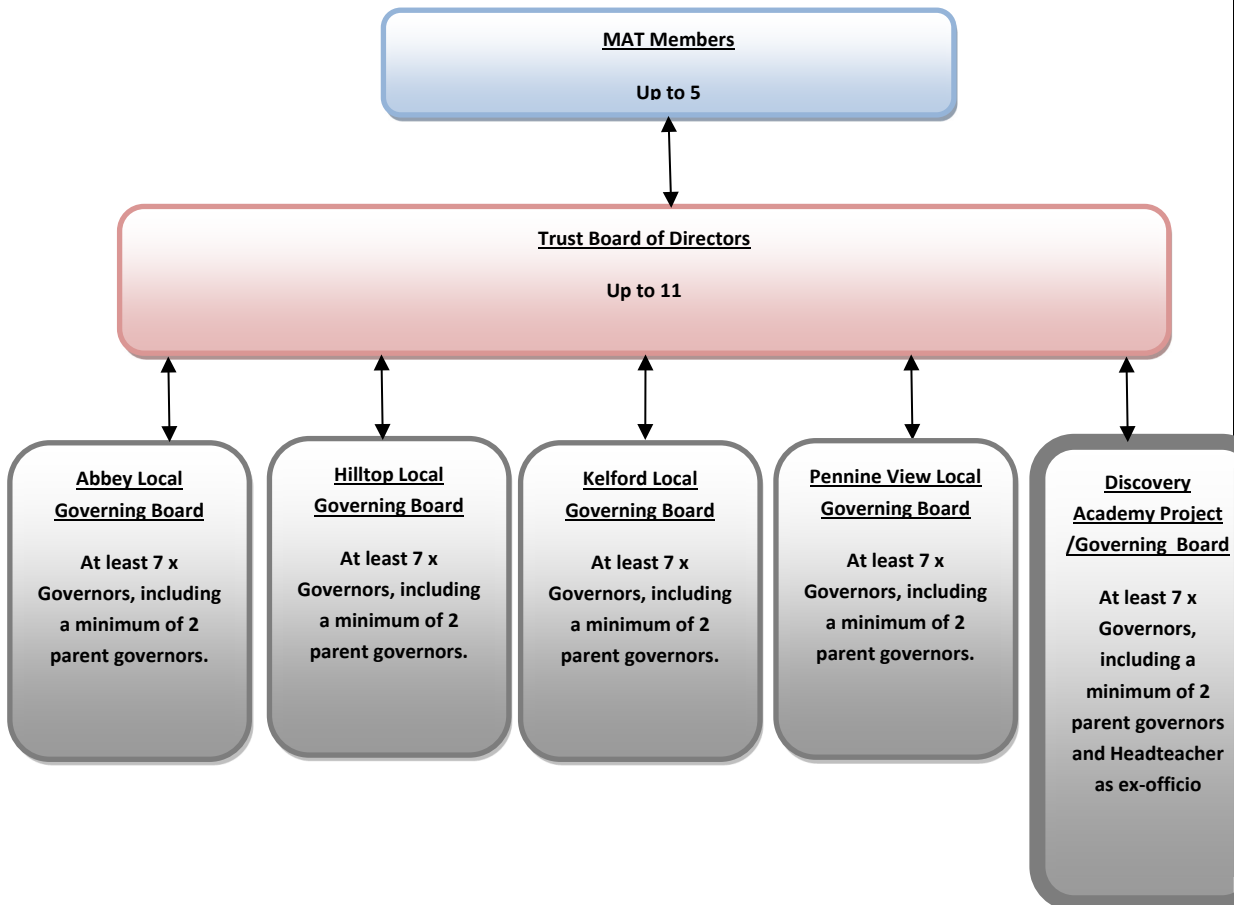
The Trust has partnered with Lloyds Banking Group to deploy senior members of their staff as “e-Governors” in response to Lord Nash’s call for MATs to draw on flexible means of engaging private sector expertise in academy governance. At the time of writing, 2 senior Lloyds’ officers are deployed across the Trust’s governance committees. These governors do not physically attend meetings, but act as “associate” governors dialling into the meetings and undertaking online governance work (and via the telephone) on specific assigned areas, such as finance, HR etc.

For the Discovery Academy, a project board will be established at the earliest stage of pre-opening to oversee the implementation of the school project plan. This project board will be appointed to from the Nexus MAT Board of Directors bringing in additional expertise as required. 6 months prior to opening, a local governing body will run parallel to the project board to ensure a seamless handover of duties post-opening. This will include joint meetings of the two bodies and a development plan for the LGB will be put in place. Nexus MAT is already working with the DfE’s commissioned “School Governors’ One-Stop Shop” service and will continue to draw on their expertise when recruiting the local governors for the Discovery Academy.

The Trust Board will use a bespoke scheme of delegation with Discovery Academy upon opening, so that the central Trust has greater oversight of provision. Initially, duties will be limited to teaching and learning oversight, with the Trust Board retaining any financial or procedural decision making powers. A transition plan will be developed over the first 12 months of the free school’s lifespan (post opening), to

**F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**

ensure that there is clearly planned process for the delegation of powers to the LGB. Running parallel to this will an LGB development plan which facilitates improved competence of the LGB to fulfil their delegated duties. The Governors Competency Framework will be used to inform the skills and experience of individuals recruited to the LGB. This approach is similar to the model the Trust uses for sponsored schools, and therefore the Trust has experience of operating with this nuanced approach.



Nexus MAT will appoint a Principal Designate to lead on the development of Discovery Academy from concept stage to opening, responsible to the project board and the Chief Executive Officer and the Trust Board.

Appointments will prioritise reducing the potential for conflicts of interest in any governance or employed role, to ensure that governance is as open and transparent as possible. Where there are any pecuniary or business interests, details will be recorded by the Trust clerk and conflicts of interest will be factored into any decision making process. The Trust has a published code of conduct for all those holding a governance position, and the checks undertaken at recruitment scope where there may be any conflicts of interest so that these can be referred to Directors for a decision on whether these rule an individual out. The Trust has also published an agreed procedure for the investigation and/or removal of any holder of a governance position should concerns arise.

**F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**

The Governance Structure of Discovery Academy will comply with the Scheme of Delegation of Nexus MAT and be structured as follows:

LGBs will meet 3 times a term, with each of the 3 meetings focusing on one specific theme:

1. Safeguarding & Wellbeing
2. Teaching & Learning
3. Leadership & Management

Standardised reports will be required by school leadership in line with the other schools in the MAT, accompanied by any external audit work (by the specialist independent consultants outlined above) to allow for triangulation and objective assessment and assurance. Between each thematic LGB, the link governors will undertake work commissioned by the LGB and report back on findings the following term.

At each LGB, governors will receive a budget report from the School Business Manager and any policy updates from senior leadership, as standing agenda items.

All LGB chairs are expected to be members of the Trust's Heads/LGB Chairs Advisory Committee. This facilitates bi-directional communication between the LGBs and Directors, allowing for voice and influence to be exchanged in both directions. The Trust Board routinely commission independent experts to undertake regular reviews at school level (e.g. financial audit, curriculum area experts, safeguarding, health and safety etc.), and recommendations for these reviews are passed to LGBs to oversee (unless the recommendations relate to conduct of LGBs – then the CEO or a committee of the Trust Board oversee their implementation), with the LGBs then held to account via the work programme of the Trust Audit & Finance and Standards Committees. Discovery Academy will fall within this framework. The Trust Board also has a designated Director with responsibility for safeguarding, and this individual will meet regularly with Designated Safeguarding Leads and link governors for safeguarding to allow them to assure the Board that practice is in line with statutory requirements.

## Section G – accurate financial plans that are consistent with the rest of the application, demonstrate financial viability, and are based on realistic assumptions about income and expenditure

Please

- complete the Excel spreadsheet (where necessary);
- add any commentary you want to include in the space provided below, for example, explaining the costs of centrally provided services (we do **not** want you to provide a commentary on the whole budget, just particular areas you want to highlight); and
- refer to the relevant section of the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.

### Section G – budget planning and affordability

#### Introduction & Context

The Chief Executive Officer and Chief Finance Officer from Nexus Multi Academy Trust, alongside the Headteacher and School Business Manager of Discovery Academy will ensure that there is a clear, affordable and sustainable financial plan in place which accurately reflects the delivery of the curriculum and the fully costed School Improvement Plan for the school year. This will inform the detailed medium-term financial strategy for the school. The Local Governing Body will be involved in the budget setting for the school each year between February and July, and monthly budget monitoring will also be submitted to the Local Governing Body and subsequently the Trust Board as part of the Trust's consolidated Management Accounts. **Please refer to the attached Excel spreadsheet for detailed financial plans and assumptions for Discovery Academy.**

The financial plans fully support the vision and the education plan in section D of this application and all costs are based on these plans and the build- up of pupils within the first 3 years of opening until the school is in steady state.

#### Income

Sheffield City Council has already published their plans for the funding of the free school based on [REDACTED] place funding which will be paid to the school directly via the ESFA, together with additional Top Up/Element 3 funding of between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. For the budget preparation, we have assumed a Top Up/Element 3 funding agreement of [REDACTED] for primary pupils and [REDACTED] for secondary pupils.

## Section G – budget planning and affordability

The Place funding of [REDACTED] per pupil will be allocated to the school infrastructures. This will cover costs including:

- Buildings,
- Premises,
- Utilities,
- SLT,
- Business manager and administration,
- Ancillary staff.
- Curriculum Development
- School Improvement.

The Top Up Base funding of either [REDACTED] per pupil will fund teaching teams.

Pupil Premium figures: are based on [REDACTED] per pupil up to Y6 and [REDACTED] per pupil for pupils Y7-11 and assumptions on numbers of pupils on Free School Meals are based on similar percentage to free school meal children at our other schools. For example, in 2018-19 we have based the calculation on 3 primary [REDACTED] and 19 secondary children ([REDACTED]). Total in 2018-19 of [REDACTED].

Other Government Grants: PE Sports Grant is based on Y1 – Y6 children this will build as numbers grow. Universal Infant Free School Meals and Y7 catch up, all of which are based on assumptions of a similar school. [REDACTED]

Residential income is based on the Trust receiving [REDACTED] from Sheffield City Council. This income is realistic given the residential staffing structure required to support 6 pupils.

### Expenditure

**Staff costs:** Tab G4 'Staff' on the spreadsheet shows how the staff costs have been calculated. Our assumptions are based on recruiting mainly at the upper quartile of the staff salary banding to ensure costings are realistic and to build some contingency into the staffing costs. National Insurance rates have been calculated based on a similar school [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We do not intend to directly employ any catering staff which is why this line is empty. Catering is included in the 'Other' costs section of the spreadsheet.

**Other Staff costs:** Supply costs are calculated based on comparable costs in other special schools within Nexus MAT. Indirect Employee expenses are linked to a similar school's expenses budget and will cover travel and subsistence claims.

## Section G – budget planning and affordability

**Development & Training:** The budget will be lower in the first 2 years of opening due to low staff numbers; this will increase when at steady state. Assumptions are based on similar Service Level Agreements for training costs of a similar school and calculated against the number of staff in post year on year. Recruitment costs cover advertising, recruitment and DBS checks and these will be higher in the first year and then reduce when in a steady state. We have taken costings from similar recruitment campaigns. We have factored in a cumulative inflationary increase of 1.5% year on year on other staff costs.

**Premises costs:** Buildings and grounds maintenance costs are based on similar Service Level Agreements for a similar school within Nexus MAT. Cleaning & Catering and Water and Sewage costs are also based on similar contracts for a similar school in Nexus MAT and pro-rated. Energy costs are based on a similar school and pro-rated. We have factored in a cumulative inflationary increase of 1.5% year on year on premises costs.

**Educational Resources:** all costs are based on a similar school. We have factored in a cumulative inflationary increase of 1.5% year on year on Educational Resources costs.

**Professional services:** costs have been benchmarked against a similar Nexus school and also include a subscription to the Teaching School Alliance. We have factored in a cumulative inflationary increase of 1.5% year on year on Professional Services costs.

**Other costs:** we have factored in additional expenditure to cover the Multi Academy Trust contribution, an estimate of Pension Deficit contribution and an Apprenticeship Levy payment of 0.5% of the employer's pay bill. We have also factored in for the RPA insurance, based on number of pupils as per the ESFA guidance. We have factored in additional costs for buying in CAMHS support, educational psychologists, speech and language therapists etc. Costs increase as numbers build until reach steady state. Transport costs have also been included which is based on a similar contract with a similar special school.

**Residential costs:** have been included in the 'Other costs' section of the spreadsheet. All residential costs have been calculated based on similar residential provision. In addition to staffing, costs include laundry, building maintenance, transport, catering and food. ICT equipment for 6 residential pupils is factored into the ICT budget [REDACTED]. Additional cleaning costs for the residential provision will be bought in through a Service Level Agreement and costs have been included in the bought in 'professional services' section. Water and Energy costs for residential have been included in line 128 and 130 of the spreadsheet.

## **Section G – budget planning and affordability**

### Affordability

We have only included viable agreed income for core services to our primary pupils and have not put in additional variable income which might be received for pupils with more complex needs. Due to the low pupil numbers in the first few years and to ensure financial sustainability, we have assumed our secondary pupils will receive Element 3/intensive Top Up funding of [REDACTED]. Any additional funding received/negotiated with the LA will be used to support individual pupil programmes. Please note: all of our children will have a statement or EHC plan so we have not used the mainstream financial template.

Using the above assumptions, there is a healthy in year outturn surplus and a healthy cumulative reserves surplus across all of the 7 years projected, demonstrating financial sustainability and resilience in the financial model.

Ensuring financial viability and sustainability is one of the Trust's key strategic objectives. A school cannot determine its resource allocation now and in future years if it doesn't have a strong grip on its current and planned expenditure or fully understand the external pressures on school budgets. The Chief Finance Officer's role, through the production of Medium Term Financial Plans for the school, is to identify current and future pressures, challenge budgetary assumptions and ensure budgets are affordable, sustainable and realistic. This includes understanding the impact of the application of the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG), the reduction of the Educational Services Grant (ESG), the potential increases in Pension Deficits, national pay agreements, inflationary increases, the application of the Apprenticeship Levy and the pressures on Local Authority High needs blocks. All of these pressures have been taken into account in the production of the budget spreadsheet.

The Chief Finance Officer, Headteacher and School Business Manager will ensure there is a detailed 3-5 year medium-term financial plan in place for the school, together with fully costed and realistic plans for School Improvement, Premises Development and ICT development and that these plans are regularly updated in line with emerging priorities.

### How the School will be able to achieve further financial efficiencies

The following areas will be actively targeted to ensure the school operates efficiently and secures best value:

- Sharing of staff and expertise across the Trust.



## **Section G – budget planning and affordability**

- Traded Services Review via Nexus MAT to achieve greater economies of scale for bought in services.
- Income generation for Discovery Academy through bid and grant writing (which will be overseen by the Trust CFO)
- Joint procurement/bulk buying arrangements across the Trust to secure further savings.
- Increasing the deployment of school experts – for example NLEs and SLEs - which will generate additional income for the school.
- Putting a proportion of support staff on fixed term contracts which provide Discovery Academy with the flexibility to increase or decrease its staff costs in line with the funding received and to support specific pupil needs.
- Renegotiation of commissioning arrangements with the Local Authority SEN Commissioner based on individual pupil need through the ECHP review process.

### Sensitivity Analysis

Discovery Academy is expected to show how it will be able to achieve further financial efficiencies if the recruitment of pupils is only 70% of the figures initially expected. For Discovery Academy, this equates to [REDACTED] savings in the first year. In Year 1, we are projecting a surplus outturn figure of [REDACTED] and we have set aside [REDACTED] as a contingency. If recruitment is lower than anticipated, we would therefore need to find [REDACTED]. If this was the case we would reduce costs by sharing staff and expertise across the Trust to reduce the SLT expenditure e.g. we would not employ the Deputy Head until later years when the numbers build. However, the local authority has provided strong evidential demand for places at Discovery Academy, as have neighbouring LAs in Rotherham, and Sheffield. This provides the school with certainty in terms of commissioning of the places (and the Top Up amount the LA is prepared to pay), so we are confident that the pupil numbers and therefore the income is realistic.

### Centrally provided services from the Trust

Nexus Multi Academy Trust pays for HR services for all of the schools and Discovery Academy will also benefit from this. In addition, the Trust pays for Audit and Accounts fees and we have funds available to pay for school improvement activity. In addition, Discovery Academy will have access to Trust Reserves to cover any unforeseen budget pressures. Between now and the opening of Discovery Academy, it is likely that more costs currently in the Discovery Academy budget will be lifted to the central Trust as part of collective re-procurement and re-design of services to deliver financial efficiency.

## Annexes

Please:

- Provide CVs of key individuals, any letters of support and maps.
- The annex is excluded from the page limit but should be submitted as part of your application, i.e. as one Word document.
- refer to the relevant section of the [application guidance and the criteria for assessment](#) for what should be included in this section.



Department  
for Education

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