Vision
Values
and
Strategic Plan
2021-2025

A Trust of Opportunity

This Strategic Plan shows how the Discovery Educational Trust adds value to the work of its individual schools, through its overarching vision and strategy for improvement for the next four years.

Our core purpose is to improve the life chances of our pupils, maximising their achievements, both academic and social.

We aim for each of our schools to become the school of choice within the community, offering a broad and exciting range of extracurricular activities to enhance the opportunities within their formal curriculum.

Our Vision

Strong and effective leadership places our children and young people at the heart of everything we do.

1. Our schools offer our children and young people a high quality inclusive education, a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum and a safe and stimulating place to grow, learn and develop. All pupils are fully prepared to seize the opportunities of the rapidly changing world and become active and responsible global citizens.

2. There is effective support for the wellbeing of pupils and collaborative multi-agency working. Our pupils have a positive attitude to their education, reflecting a respectful culture and high expectations for behaviour.

3. Our Trust is an employer of choice and invests in the professional development and wellbeing of its workforce.

4. Rigorous financial planning and risk management underpin improvement and innovation and create sustainability, enabling our Trust to expand to include local schools that share our ambitions.

5. Our schools collaborate and are mutually supportive, but challenging, partners. There is wide-ranging communication with stakeholders within school and in the wider community. Their feedback helps us to continue to improve.

A Trust of Opportunity
Our Values

The Trust Board is responsible for setting the core values of the Trust, which provide a reference point for all decisions, underpinning the culture, strategy, policies and procedures of the Trust. All schools within the Trust share its values, which are made relevant according to the vision and improvement plan of each individual school. We communicate our values to everyone in the school's community and reaffirm their relevance annually.

We value relationships, which are open and honest, underpinned by:
kindness, trustworthiness and **compassion**.

Our working practices are led by [The Seven Nolan Principles for Public Life](#):

- **Selflessness**
- **Integrity - strength of character, courage and a strong moral code of behaviour**
- **Objectivity**
- **Accountability**
- **Openness**
- **Honesty**
- **Leadership and teamwork, striving for excellence.**

We work to ensure that all of our children and young people become fully rounded members of society, who treat others with respect and tolerance, regardless of background.

We promote the basic [British Values](#) of **democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty**, and **mutual respect** and **tolerance** for each other, regardless of any individual characteristics or beliefs. This ensures that young people leave our schools fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

We value **community**, both within and outside of school, and the need for all citizens to be positive and productive members of society.

When our values are actively engaged, the result is a supportive environment where aspirations are high and everyone feels that they belong.

A Trust of Opportunity

We asked our Trustees about opportunities they want to see offered across the Trust.

They said:

"The opportunity to explore different areas of interests and skills and abilities that any of our pupils may have, so that they are prepared to leave the Trust and contribute to the world in a way which best suits them."

"A fair education for all, learners and employees, who have the opportunities to experience success, opportunities to expand and build confidence and talents, opportunities to thrive, opportunities to build resilience and develop independence, opportunities to encourage students to develop a love of learning and a want to learn."

"I want to enable all our pupils to have the opportunity to maximise their aspirations, achievements, and contributions in school and beyond."

"World class education for children of all abilities,
Support for families and positive engagement with the wider community,
A safe refuge for children,
Training and development opportunities for all staff,
Rewards for inspirational, quality performers,
World class facilities and cutting edge technology."

"The opportunity to build open, honest and trusting relationships with Board members, leaders and key staff to ensure that the core values of the Trust remain at the heart of everything we do."

A Trust of Opportunity
Identification of our Key Strategic Priorities

1. The Quality of Teaching

Rationale:
Research shows that high quality teaching is the most critical factor affecting pupils' achievements. An effective Trust-wide strategy for supporting Disadvantaged pupils helps to ensure that the barriers to their educational achievement are both identified and removed. It is crucial, therefore, that the Trust Board understands what is consistently preventing pupils from achieving their full potential (e.g. behaviour, attendance, support outside the classroom) and then ensure that resources are targeted on the right pupils, and in those areas. Trust-wide working contributes to improvement across all schools.

2. Pupil Progress and Attainment

Rationale:
All pupils, including those from specific groups such as Disadvantaged, SEND and EAL should be in an educational environment where they can make, at least, expected progress. Pupil progress and attainment form part of the floor standards, which Government uses to hold schools to account. In the same way, the Trust needs to hold its schools to account.

Attainment affects the life chances and choices of secondary pupils. The outcomes of public examinations, statutory National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments are the attainment points. Using and interpreting the data available to measure the progress that pupils make between these points and then comparing it with the progress made by pupils with similar attainment, helps the Trust Board to evaluate the impact of the Trust-wide curriculum and the extent to which priorities in the Strategic Plan are being met.

3. Pupil Safety and Wellbeing

Rationale:
Children and young people with high levels of emotional, behavioural and social wellbeing are, on average, more engaged with school and have higher levels of academic achievement. Whole school and individual approaches to positive mental health and wellbeing are particularly important in the current Covid-19 pandemic. The Trust supports its schools to deliver this.

The Trust Board has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, according to the statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*. Regardless of specific priorities, the culture of safeguarding influences the Trust's strategy.

The Trust Board continually monitors and evaluates the extent to which this is evident in the safeguarding policies and procedures; the arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils, who are at risk; the process for referring and seeking appropriate support for those at risk; and for managing safeguarding allegations.

4. Pupil Behaviour and Attitudes

Rationale:
Although it is an individual school responsibility to implement a Behaviour Policy, pupils' behaviour and attitudes is one of four areas for which Ofsted makes a graded judgement and is a barometer of school culture.

Routinely monitoring and evaluating the implementation of policies designed to promote good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils provide the Trust Board with assurance that the expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct are commonly understood. It also demonstrates that the policies are being applied consistently Trust-wide. Regular attendance is a prerequisite for educational success and underpins a positive attitude towards learning.

5. Strong and Effective Leadership and Management including Governance

Rationale:
The future of the Trust and its schools depends on the quality of its leaders. The Trust supports current leaders and develops future leaders. Senior leaders are held to account for high standards and school improvement activity being developed and maintained. Leaders speak positively about the Trust and act to bring about the achievement of our vision.

6. Staff Morale and Wellbeing

Rationale:
As the employer, the Trust has a duty of care to all staff. There is a direct correlation between staff morale and staff performance, including high quality teaching. The Trust needs to monitor staff morale across all schools including factors such as workload, absence data and staff turnover. Support for staff may be offered Trust-wide.

The culture of the organisation and the Trust Board's strategy promote a healthy working environment for all staff. A healthy working environment contributes towards attracting and retaining quality staff, who are the Trust's most important resource.

When monitoring and evaluating the wellbeing and morale of staff, the Trust Board pays particular attention to how workload is assessed.

Key Strategic Priorities	Strategy for Improvement	Monitoring and Review	Success Criteria
1. The Quality of Teaching	The Trust ensures that the schools are supported and challenged to achieve high quality teaching across all Year Groups and subjects through: • effective CPD; • use of Central Team Trust Development Leads; • identification of high quality practitioners and leaders to utilise their skills for wider impact; • recruitment of well-qualified teachers; • increasing school to school peer review and support within the Trust; • use of external advisors; • identifying the barriers to all pupils achieving their full potential and targeting with evidence-based resources.	Uptake and impact of CPD. EHT and HTs' reports including anonymised data from lesson observations and PMRs. External validation from advisor or other schools. Ofsted reports. Anonymised pupil feedback. Proportion of staff with relevant and specialist qualifications.	Our schools offer our children and young people a high quality inclusive education, a broad, balanced, and ambitious curriculum and a safe and stimulating place to grow, learn and develop. All pupils are fully prepared to seize the opportunities of the rapidly changing world and become active and responsible global citizens. All pupils make good progress compared to similar pupils nationally. Our Trust is an employer of choice and invests in the professional development and wellbeing of its workforce. The CPD programme ensures that our staff have the right skills to raise standards, deliver high quality teaching and learning, and disseminate best practice to ensure rapid improvement. All teaching is good or outstanding.

2. Pupil Progress and Attainment	The Trust:	Monitoring – as above.	Our schools offer our children and young people a high quality inclusive education, a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum and a safe and stimulating place to grow, learn and develop. All pupils are fully prepared to seize the opportunities of the rapidly changing world and become active and responsible global citizens.
	Continually focuses on improving the Quality of Teaching (as above).	EHT reports on impact of curriculum offer across the Trust and how Catch-up premium and evidence-based approaches are delivering a recovery curriculum based on individual needs.	
	Designs a broad and balanced curriculum offer to meet the needs of all pupils in Trust schools. Following the pandemic, the Trust ensures that all pupils, who need it, can benefit from a recovery curriculum using evidence-based approaches and Catch Up funding.	Progress 8 and Attainment 8 (secondary).	Our schools raise attainment and improve progression by ensuring that there is a rigorous and robust programme of Quality Assurance that helps to support teachers and leaders, build expertise and capacity, and raise standards to deliver positive outcomes for pupils.
	Develops a Trust-wide SEND Policy, using evidence-based approaches to maximise progress and attainment.	Comparative data on progress and attainment of specific groups of pupils. Identification and action on the barriers to learning experienced by many Disadvantaged and SEND pupils.	
	Develops a Trust-wide approach to Disadvantaged and EAL pupils, using evidence-based approaches to maximise progress and attainment.	Trustee monitoring visits.

ASP.

DfE benchmarking data. | |
| | Builds Middle Leader school improvement capacity in order that they are able to have a positive impact on school improvement capacity across the Trust. | Distribution of GCSE and A level points across subjects (secondary).

EYFS Assessments, Phonics checks & KS2 SATs results. | |
| | Appoints Trust Development Leads (TDLs) to monitor Quality of Teaching and Personal Development (Attitudes and Behaviour) across the Trust. | IDSR. | |

| 3. Pupil Safety and Wellbeing | Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures are kept up to date and actioned correctly by staff in all schools.

Single Central Record (SCR) is kept accurate and up to date.

Trust procedures are effective in identifying and supporting pupils at risk.

Annual Safeguarding and Child Protection Training for all Trust staff, including Central Team, and for Local Governors and Trustees as part of induction and on an ongoing annual basis.

Plan for Trust-wide approaches to mental health and wellbeing support are set out and have begun to be put in place with appropriate resources.

Concern for pupil safety and wellbeing is made evident on Trust website and other publicity, in all related policies and procedures and in recruitment of staff. | Specialist (Link) Trustee monitors and reports on Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures across the Trust.

Regular checks by Central Team and ad-hoc checks by LSCs on SCR.

Number of referrals.

Anonymised outcomes of referrals.

Annual External Audits across the Trust.

All staff and Trustees attest to having read the statutory KCSiE guidance.

Examples of multi-agency working, which has benefited DET pupils.

Safeguarding Trustee reports on extent to which concern for safety and wellbeing of pupils is evident in school environment, publicity and on website.

Pupil feedback through surveys and group discussion. | Our schools provide a secure and safe environment. All children know how to keep themselves safe and who to speak to if they feel unsafe. All staff know how to identify and seek support for children at risk.

There is effective support for the wellbeing of pupils and collaborative multi-agency working.

All schools use safer recruitment practices when appointing new staff.

All schools offer a broad and exciting range of extracurricular activities to enhance the opportunities within their formal curriculum. |
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| 4. Pupil Behaviour and Attitudes | The Trust promotes:

• a culture of anti-bullying though checking that behaviour-related policies in all schools are designed to promote good behaviour and seek to prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils.

• high expectations of pupil conduct in all activities, which are articulated by all staff, creating a positive and respectful culture.

• a calm working environment, which benefits pupils' learning.

• regular attendance. | Number of bullying incidents and example outcomes.

Number of exclusions, permanent and fixed-term.

Observed behaviour on learning walks by Local Governors and Trustees.

Observed behaviour and conduct by external advisors and Ofsted.

Pupil feedback through surveys and group discussion.

Trustee monitoring visits.

Learning walks by Local Governors and Trustees.

Data on attendance and persistent absentees. | Our pupils have a positive attitude to their education, reflecting a respectful culture and high expectations for behaviour.

All pupils feel secure and valued in our schools and are confident that they have the support that they need to enjoy school and make good progress.

There is effective support for the wellbeing of pupils and collaborative multi-agency working. |

5. Strong and Effective Leadership and Management including Governance	The Trust ensures that: EHT/external advisor mentor HTs. EHT is mentored by experienced MAT CEO. Trustees undertake EHT Performance Management with external advisor. Effective CPD for SLT Trust-wide and high quality training for Trustees and Local Governors. Activities to raise the profile of the Trust with: - employees - parents - wider community Build Middle Leader school improvement capacity in order that they can have a positive impact on school improvement capacity across the Trust. Leaders identify risks and implement mitigations. Leaders undertake rigorous financial planning and management. EHT establishes and develops the new Central Team and communicates its purpose to all, ensures CPD and sets out accountabilities for that team.	Reports from EHT and external advisor. Records of CPD and observations of impact. Evaluations of Trustee and Local Governor training. Examples of activities. Feedback from stakeholders through surveys. Examples of such work reported by Middle Leaders directly or through EHT report to Trust Board. Staff speak positively about the Trust and their work in it. One Risk registers, incorporating operational and strategic risks has been implemented and is available to monitor. Reports to Trust Board from CFOO and internal and external auditors. EHT reports on impact of work by Central Team. Central Team make annual direct reports to Trust Board.	Strong and effective leadership places our children and young people at the heart of everything we do. A comprehensive governance framework supports clear roles and responsibilities. Our schools offer a safe and stimulating place to grow, learn and develop. Rigorous financial planning and risk management underpin improvement and innovation and create sustainability, enabling our Trust to expand to include local schools that share our ambitions and/or to ccontinuously improve the quality of provision whilst balancing the DET budget. Our schools collaborate and are mutually supportive, but challenging, partners. There is wide-ranging communication with stakeholders within the schools and in the wider community. Their feedback helps us to continue to improve.

| 6. Staff Morale and Wellbeing | The Trust:

Monitors staff morale through annual surveys, which are comparable in scope.

Implements a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy across the Trust, which includes sources of support for staff experiencing mental health problems, or who are concerned about their own wellbeing.

Leaders set a positive example of managing their own workload and regularly assess the workload of their staff. | EHT reports on Trust-wide:

• measures taken to monitor workload and how it is assessed.
• absence data.
• staff turnover.
• measures taken to support staff.

Specialist (Link) Trustee for Mental Health and Wellbeing is appointed by the Trust Board.

Impact of Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is monitored. | Our Trust is an employer of choice and invests in the professional development and wellbeing of its workforce.

Policies and practices ensure positive staff wellbeing leading to high commitment and enthusiasm, enabling staff, in turn, to support their pupils. |