



Culture Book

Achieving a healthy creative culture

Volume 10 | discoverytrust.org

 [@discoverytrust](https://twitter.com/discoverytrust)

“

“A hallmark of a **healthy creative culture** is that its people feel free to share ideas, opinions, and criticisms. Lack of candour, if unchecked, ultimately leads to dysfunctional environments.”

Ed Catmull, President of Pixar

Contents

05	Welcome from the CEO	20	Discovery's Bridge to Success
06	What's a Culture Book for?	22	Living Our Beliefs
08	Our Vision	29	How Discovery Leaders Behave
08	Our Values	30	Cultural Evolution
16	Why we do what we do	31	Making A Difference
16	What we do	32	Our Pledges
18	We Achieve More Together	38	Appendix



**At Discovery Trust
our mission is to
ensure that all our
pupils realise their
potential.**

At Discovery Trust, our mission is to ensure that all our pupils realise their potential.

Our mission starts inside every school and central department. It is reflected in our culture and is reflected by all the colleagues we work with. In the pursuit of our mission, we employ a diverse range of highly talented people to co-construct the very best places to learn, with innovative solutions to ensure that all children achieve. Discovery continually builds to creating an organisation that celebrates individuality, initiative, ownership of colleagues' responsibilities and intelligent collaboration.

Paul Stone



Paul Stone
CEO

What's a Culture Book for?

At Discovery, we are very proud of our culture. It is the binding element that allows diverse individuals and schools to work collectively to achieve our mission.

We celebrate our culture with all our stakeholders, and it's something we constantly review together. This Culture Book shares where we are, what we believe in and how we work together as a Trust to ensure our children receive the very best education we can offer. It reminds colleagues, school communities and future partners, who we are, what we do, and why we do it.

Our culture reflects the shared efforts of all our work by every single colleague within the Trust. It reflects the energy, commitment, passion and time dedicated by individuals and schools that has shaped Discovery into the organisation of positive change that it is.

Richard Bettsworth



Richard Bettsworth
Chair of the Board





Our Vision

Regardless of your role within Discovery, we are working for something bigger. Everything we do is to ensure that children and the colleagues we work with realise their potential and experience limitless learning opportunities.

Discovery Trust aspires to achieve excellence in all areas of work. The children and families we work with have confidence in the teachers and leaders of the Trust who act with integrity and demonstrate respect for individual needs. Discovery aspires for all our schools to become sustainable and inclusive, driven by a passion for working in partnership with all stakeholders.



Our Values

Our values matter.

They drive what we do and underpin every action we take. Our values are not just words. They support our purpose and help us function together as one and shape the way we behave.

We use these values to work as a highly productive partnership across diverse schools and service departments. We expect schools to develop a localized set of values to ensure their community is engaged and successful.



We have selected 6 key values which permeate all the work we do and the choices we make.

Our Values



Inclusion

Include, value and respect each other

- We create a community that is welcoming and inclusive of all.
- We increase the presence, participation, and achievement of all.



“



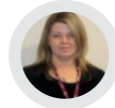
“No matter where you are from or what your background is every single person that works at Discovery does so together and with one common goal - to ensure that EVERY SINGLE CHILD receives an education that helps them to fulfil their potential.”

Halil Tangumus, Headteacher Braunstone Community Primary



“Inclusion is at the heart of Discovery’s working practices; we value and support each member of the school community.”

Megan Williams, SEMH Lead



“Inclusion is most effective when it becomes part of the culture and is part of ‘the way things are done here’. It actively removes barriers for individuals by having its learners at the centre of practice, takes advantage of current schools of research, sees all learners as capable of greatness and it is achieved through practices that focus on making learning experiences accessible to all, being adaptable, being consciously structured to achieve success and most of all by being brave.”

Vicky Edwards, Headteacher of Keyham Lodge

Our Values



Sustainability

Act and think about the sustainability of all our actions

- We make decisions based on long-term impact rather than short-term gains
- We take actions to reduce impact on our environment and raise awareness with adults and pupils

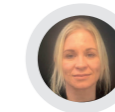


“



“Our aim is to ensure everyone has a deep understanding of being sustainable at a local, national and global level and it is important that all our decisions reflect this.”

Jo Andrews, Headteacher Parkland Primary



“I’m proud that as a trust, we have a culture of considering the 3-5year impact of every financial decision we make to ensure it is sustainable & achieves the maximum impact to our children & colleagues.”

Emma Clarke, Finance Director



“Discovery Trust afford me the scope and flexibility to explore sustainable options and I have the full backing of the senior leadership team. My ideas are heard, challenge but ultimately met with positivity.”

Nathan Odom, Head of Estates

Our Values



Partnership

A willingness and desire to work effectively with others

- We learn from organisations outside of your setting to improve your practice.
- We create impact which is not possible by working in isolation.

“



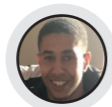
“As a school leader, it is an honour working in partnerships with the other schools and services in Discovery Trust. The access to services, expertise and support is undeniably essential in order to run a successful school.”

Michelle Tobin, Headteacher, Redlands Primary



“I have really benefited from the TDT (teacher development time) the trust has put in place. This has enabled me to enhance my teaching practice. It has allowed me to concentrate on areas that I felt I needed to develop further.”

Anne Marie Timmins, Teacher, Mowmacre Hill Primary School



“Being part of a positive culture and trust has allowed this. We do this through a massive drive to ensure all young people we work with experience a positive learning experience, all-in real-life circumstances, allowing staff to express their feelings and go above and beyond to make this happen! Its a privilege.”

Isaac Marlowe, Inclusion Mentor

Our Values



Integrity

Demonstrate sound moral and ethical principles

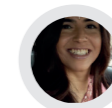
- We do the right thing, even when circumstances might be difficult
- We ensure our actions are consistent with our words

“



“Being yourself and doing the right thing is not always the easy path, it takes courage to live by your morals. At Discovery we all seek to take the right path and stand up for what we believe for the greater good of everyone.”

Louise Barber, Director of Operations



“No two days are the same. Each day brings fresh challenges. Having the skills and confidence to work with confidence and integrity is easy to do when you are secure in the knowledge that Discovery has the best interests of all pupils.”

Rita Samj, Parkland OM



“In Discovery I know that I have other POs that I can lean on and I know I have the backing and support from my line manager(s) to ensure that this school and every school we work with is as safe as possible for all children and staff.”

Alfie Tyler, Premises Officer Braunstone

Our Values



Respect

Treat everyone with respect and fairness

- We are thoughtful of others and act with kindness.
- We promote diversity of thought, ideas and people.

“



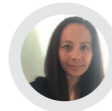
“Respect for me is despite having differences, I can accept everyone for who they are and treat them with fairness and kindness. At Discovery we welcome everyone’s ideas and input and this helps us to understand, learn and grow as individuals and as a Trust.”

Beena Chohan, HR Manager



“Respect is what binds us together as a community. Teaching understanding of how fundamental it is to be respectful of one and other all in our diverse communities will mean that we can all live in the society we would wish for.”

Jane Pinborough, HLTA Kibworth CofE Primary School



“We respect our colleagues, parents and pupils by listening to their opinions and this helps us work cooperatively towards a common goal - to do what is best for each pupil.”

Joanne Hudson, Teacher Farndon Fields

Our Values



Excellence

Strive for excellence in all we do

- We focus on what matters to deliver ambitious outcomes for all.
- We create a culture of continuous learning and innovation to drive improvements.

“



“I feel privileged to see the constant strive for excellence through the securing of trusted relationships between colleagues.”

Chris Bruce, Deputy CEO



“Our pupils deserve the very best, every day, and that as a Trust is what we strive for.”

David Briggs, Director of Primary Education



“Nothing short of excellence will do because children’s feelings, relationships and template for operating successfully in the profoundly matter.”

Dr Paula Hopkins, Senior Education Psychologist

Why we do what we do

We believe that all children have a right to succeed, and our main purpose is to ensure that all children regardless of the barriers they face, reach and learn about their full potential.

Whether you work directly or indirectly with children, you have an ability to make a real positive difference to children's lives and their outcomes. Everything we do focuses on this outcome.

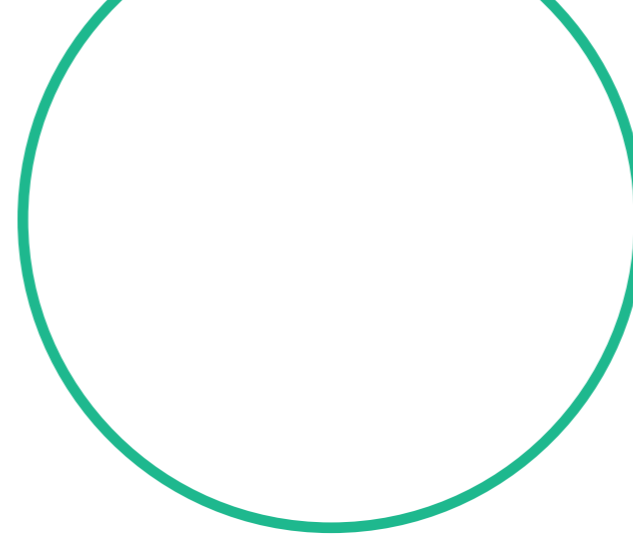


What we do

Discovery Trust works with all schools whether they are formally part of the Trust or external partner schools to provide better outcomes for all children especially those who experience a disadvantaged starting point.

All colleagues, schools and central departments strive to provide limitless learning opportunities, that inspire, raise aspiration, and level the playing field to ensure everyone is successful.

To achieve this our Trust community sets strategic goals that are revised collectively to meet the needs of our children.



Create a culture of excellence for all children and colleagues



Be highly effective and relentless at removing barriers to learning for disadvantaged children



Effective central services that ensure colleagues can focus on core tasks



Effective partnerships that reduce workload and inspire innovation



Create a sustainable organisation for decision making, colleague development, and environmental footprint

We Achieve More Together

Each and every colleague plays a vital part in educating and nurturing our pupils. Regardless of whether you work directly or indirectly with children, at Discovery Trust we value the job you do and will support you to reach your full potential.

Collaboration is expected and we actively seek our employees' opinions and ideas – everyone's voice is valid.

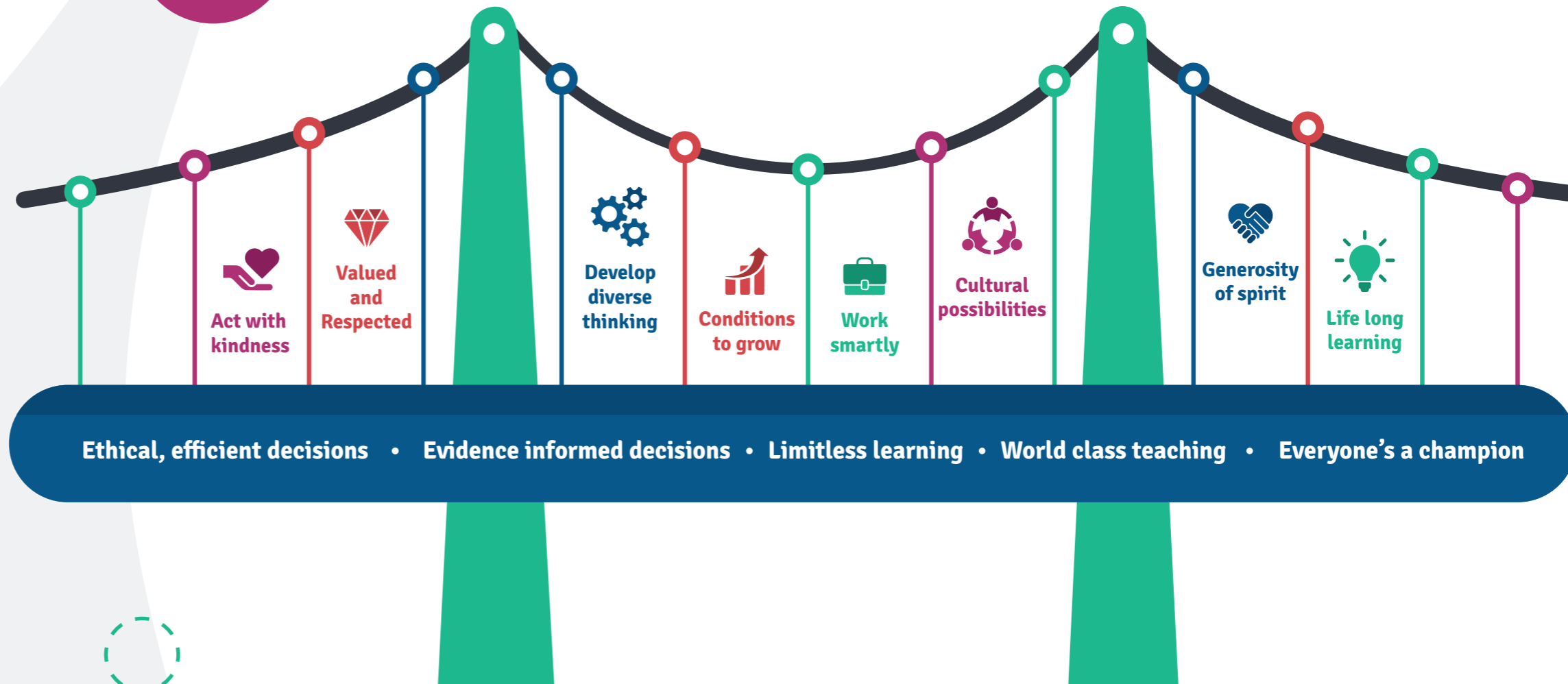


Discovery's Bridge to Success

At Discovery we want everyone to feel that they belong, to be fulfilled and empowered to reach their potential.

Therefore, it is important you understand what we stand for, believe in, and how we work to unlock limitless learning opportunities!

Our Bridge to Success sets out a graphic to demonstrate that all these beliefs are interrelated and together they are essential for success. The aspects within are nonhierarchical and written for both colleagues and the children that we serve.



Living Our Beliefs



We believe that **everyone should be championed**. It should be our mission to reduce the barriers for disadvantaged learners and demonstrate high expectations for all.

If we want our children to be successful, then we need to provide the **unconditional love and care** that all children deserve.



We believe that **truly great teaching** is that which improves outcomes and increases a child's progress. Everyone deserves the very best, all of the time.

As colleagues, we are **reflective practitioners** who review outcomes, and identify ways to improve, **"being better never stops."**



We believe **achieving the core skills needed for the next stage of development** is key to ensuring everyone can reach their potential. A love of learning is cultivated in all that we do.

Achieving the expected level is only a starting point. Everyone should have confidence in themselves to **achieve limitless learning**.



Feedback should be **motivating and timely** so that it helps everyone to progress. Feedback should be actionable, challenging, and actively focused on the steps in learning.

Improving the quality of feedback and everyone's ability to receive it is essential. Children and adults need to learn how to apply feedback to help them improve.



Living Our Beliefs



We believe an **evidenced informed approach** to decision-making and learning about what works best in education and leadership is fundamental.

We provide time for colleagues to access and engage with recognised research and provide networks to share learning across teams. **All colleagues are outward-facing in education and leadership.**



We believe that we all have a **professional obligation to improve as learners**. Colleagues recognise that we are all lifelong learners who can learn new skills to keep a breast of current thinking.

Colleagues **take responsibility for their own learning journey** as professionals and utilise the experiences, training, and opportunities on offer to improve their practice.



We believe that **smart working** is the key to success for colleagues and children.

Learning can be hard and often requires perseverance. It rarely happens without **stepping out of your comfort zone**.



Smart working requires understanding support and respect from colleagues and peers. **Efficiency and effectiveness** are drivers in the way we all work.

Work must be **manageable and proportionate** to everything that we do.



We believe that you cannot just be better- **you have to create the conditions for people to grow**.

The creation of great places to work and learn is vital for mental health and work-life balance. We expect leaders to **create the conditions where everyone can thrive**.



We believe in **the culture of possibilities**, where we can all make progress beyond that which anyone, including ourselves, could have imagined.

We provide situations where **aspirations are raised**. In Discovery we unlock what everyone believes is possible.





Living Our Beliefs



We believe that everyone **should know they are valued and respected**. Everyone is encouraged to engage with stakeholder surveys and consultation groups.

We value honest conversations and take action upon people's views



We think carefully about budgeting, the effective use of resources, and gain the **best value in how we spend money** to ensure we have the means to provide the very best outcomes for everyone. Everyone within Discovery deserves the very best opportunities, and maximising our funding is a key part of what we do. We demonstrate integrity and excellence in how we spend public money. We consider equality and equity across our organisation for everyone to ensure sustainability and how we best use the money we have.



We welcome **diverse ideas to solve problems and celebrate diversity** in all areas. Collective engagement and stakeholder inclusion are key to successful outcomes

Improving **cultural diversity and inclusion is important** for everyone. Understanding and learning about different views and ideas ensure our decisions are grounded, relevant and inclusive.

Living Our Beliefs



We value **generosity of spirit** between colleagues, our children and other stakeholders within the education system.

We believe if humanity is to solve the challenges of future, developing a **generosity of spirit will be vital to our survival.**



We acknowledge that we all make mistakes. **Ownership and taking responsibility for mistakes** is the most important thing, not judging or penalizing mistakes.

We believe that if we can create conditions where everyone **feels safe in making mistakes** and have the skills and structure to learn from them, success in all we undertake will be inevitable. Learning is rooted in making mistakes, reflecting and building on what we have learned.



We believe it's vital that we **seize the potential that technology can bring** to the personalisation of learning and an individual's effectiveness.

Technology should **inspire, personalise and revolutionise learning.** Technology should make life and work simpler, and not more complicated. Everyone deserves opportunities to be able to master 21st-century learning skills.



Leadership framed in kindness is central to how we work in Discovery. Integrity drives decisions and actions.

Our leaders **act in the best interests of children and colleagues** creating a circle of safety where everyone is valued. Decision-making is routed in equity and sustainability in all areas of our work.

How Discovery Leaders Behave

We believe that **authenticity is the mark of a true leader, and that leadership starts with honesty and integrity. Our leaders create leaders. Building high-quality relationships at all levels is a fundamental part of excellent leadership. They arm their colleagues with the skills and experiences they need to succeed, then step out of the way. Leadership is about understanding the strength of humility, we connect with our values and ask ourselves: How can we be better?**

Everyone in the team has a unique skill set, expertise, and experience to ensure that all children, colleagues and schools deliver their potential. To create a culture of excellence we provide an environment of personal and professional development, in which each individual takes responsibility and shares ownership. Leadership is not about doing it alone, our leaders welcome thoughts and ideas from all colleagues on how to make Discovery not just a great place to work and learn but an amazing one.



Cultural Evolution

We are all responsible for the creation and development of culture. However, structures and systems to ensure time is given to reflect and develop our culture is essential. Living our culture is everyone's business and colleagues need to feel empowered to challenge and ask questions when they feel Discovery is not living by what it has identified.

To help structure this, we have several mechanisms to allow us to reflect and gain feedback:



Equality Consultation Group:

Meets half termly to review practice, policy, and ways to improve inclusion for all stakeholders.



Joint Consultation Group:

Trust leaders meet with Union representatives termly to review policy, employment conditions and other ways we can work together.



Stakeholder Surveys:

We survey our stakeholders as a Trust regularly and use this information to improve areas of Trust.



Our Annual Awards Ceremony:

We hold an annual Awards Night to celebrate children and colleagues' achievements and how they have demonstrated the values of the Trust.

We hope you will see our culture come to life through Trust-wide events for children and adults, through sports, curriculum days, conferences, and social events.

Making a Difference in our Communities

We support each other to make a difference in our community on a local, national and global scale. Whether this is through charitable activities and meaningful partnerships or by the activities we provide to meet the needs of our communities. The word community for us incorporates everyone in our world and we believe we are connected to the world beyond our immediate locality.

Our schools serve the community during the traditional school year but also through the provision of high-quality extended provision, before and after school and engaging activities during school holidays.

Our extended service provision is about providing high-quality learning opportunities beyond the school day which is cost-effective for everyone. Children within our Trust are provided with experiences throughout the curriculum that enables them to become responsible citizens.



Our Pledges to Stakeholders

Discovery is a group of schools working in collaboration as one entity to improve and maintain high educational standards across the group. Our trust has a single legal and moral purpose: to advance education for the public benefit. Our pledge represents the responsibilities and contribution we make as an educational charity and our civic duty.

“There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children.”

Kofi Annan,
The State of the World's Children, 2000



Our Children



Great Places to Learn

Children in our settings deserve to be taught in exciting and inspiring physical and virtual spaces. We work hard to ensure that all our schools are fit for purpose and are great places to learn.

Enriching curriculum

Our curriculum is carefully planned to enable children to experience a breadth of learning both during and after the school day. Powerful experiences ensure our children are curious and inquisitive so that learning enriches the life of a child.

Brilliant Teaching and Learning

Ensuring our children have the very best teachers is at the heart of what we do. Training, developing and retaining the very best means all children experience great teaching.

High Expectations

We believe every child can achieve great things and we don't place limits on expectations for any pupil.

Compassionate Support

Colleagues within Discovery care for every child and work hard to ensure they provide the support needed for them to thrive.



Our Education System



Teacher Training

Being proactive in teacher training is the responsibility of every school leader. We provide highly effective support to teachers in the early stages of their careers, giving them strong foundations for their future.

Leadership Development

All leaders within Discovery are supported to achieve the best outcomes for children. We help train and coach the next generation of school leaders.

Policy and Systems

We take an active role in the development of local and national policy. The work of Discovery should benefit everyone.

School to School Support

Our leaders provide support for schools beyond the Trust to help all of them improve. We work collaboratively and share learning for the good of the education system.

Pioneering Networks

We learn from and with national networks where we have the ability to contribute to the system.

Our Parents and Carers



Communication

We will ensure that we communicate through a number of channels to ensure that parents and carers are kept updated with key news and their children's achievements.

Voice

Discovery encourages and values parent and carers feedback. Our schools aim to be at the centre of their communities.

Parenting Support

All of our schools offer ongoing support to parents and carers from well-trained professionals.

Governance

Our schools value the active roles that parents and carers play in advising and challenging school leadership. Parents and Carers are welcomed to join our advisory board to help our schools improve.

Celebrating Success

Our schools work hard to celebrate the achievement of all pupils. We host annual trust-wide events to celebrate our pupil's successes.

Our Colleagues



Connected Schools

Discovery offers everyone the opportunity to work together with colleagues from other schools and settings to learn and share experiences. We provide opportunities for colleagues to visit other schools to reflect on their own practice.

Valued

We want colleagues to feel valued and proud to work for Discovery. We will provide a range of workplace benefits and well-being support to ensure that help is there when they need it.

Great Leadership

Colleagues and children in our schools deserve to be led by inspiring and experienced leaders, both in school and in the trust. We will develop, attract and retain great leaders to work with and for.

One Employer, Endless Opportunities

Discovery offers colleagues a professional journey in which they can develop to realise their potential. We will work with leaders to help support the professional ambition of colleagues by offering different experiences and challenges.

Professional Development

All colleagues will have access to high-quality learning opportunities both in their role and through trust-wide training. We will support all colleagues to realise their potential within their roles and provide time to learn.

Our Schools



School Improvement

Discovery will provide schools with effective school improvement support each year to help them meet their potential.

Economies of Scale

Discovery will work strategically to create economies of scale which benefit everyone. School leaders will be involved in decision-making about the best use of the resources.

Support Team

Discovery employs a team of education experts who will support the improvement of schools in a wide range of areas.

Strategic Developments

Discovery will work with Leaders and Trustees to develop a strategic vision and action plan to help continue the journey of improvement for all schools.

Crisis Management

Discovery will be responsive to the needs of all schools. We work together to deal with the challenges we face.

Inspired by Research and Colleagues' Feedback



**Discovery Trust Colleague
Surveys 2012-2022**

**Discovery Trust Colleague
Networks**

**Josh Levine, Author of the book
“Great Mondays”**

Daniel Coyle
The Culture Code

**CIPD Organisational culture
and cultural change**

Justin McLeod, CEO of Hinge
Related Building Team Culture as
You Grow: 5 Powerful Strategies



Simon Sinek,
Author, motivational
speaker and marketing consultant

**Ken Blanchard and Scott
Blanchard,** Co-authors of The One
Minute Manager

Frances Frei and Anne Morriss,
Co-authors of Uncommon Service

James Kerr,
Author of the book Legacy

Sir John Jones
Author of the book Magic Weaver



Discovery Trust
0116 318 4066
discoverytrust.org

 **Twitter: @Discoverytrust**
 **LinkedIn: @discoverytrust**
 **Facebook: DiscoverySchoolsTrust**