



Discovering Times

Discovering Inspiring Caring Improving Achieving

It's the most wonderful time of the year!

It is the time of year when I like to send out a Christmas message to all our families to thank you for your support throughout the autumn term and wish you all well.

The year started on a high for us at Discovery Academy, as we were able to share our fantastic Ofsted report with our families. Having an inspection in the last 5 days of term seemed like 'bad luck' at the time, but the inspection and the report has enabled us to start the year continuing to strive for high expectations and start the year knowing we are offering our pupils the very best education.

This year I have introduced my Principal's clinic, to ensure that parents are aware of a dedicated time where I am available to discuss anything with you. Over the term, I have only had three appointments made. That said, these have been very successful and have resulted in a rejuvenated PTFA and a Parent and Toddler group called Giggles and Grow. It is fabulous that parents want to work with the school.

So much has happened in each classroom this term, and the resulting Discovering Times shares all of this amazing work. You will read about some of the clubs we have, the fabulous learning we have completed and some of the amazing places we have visited. I would like to thank all staff at school who contribute so much to the lives of our students.

However, as the term ends I wish that each one of you has some wonderful time with your families and enjoy the peace and love that Christmas embodies.

Everyone at Discovery Academy wishes you a very Merry Christmas and all the best for 2025.

We look forward to welcoming you back on Tuesday 7th January.

Edition 15: Autumn 2024

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Phase Leader Update – EYFS and KS1



What an amazing start to the school year we have had in EYFS and Key Stage One! We have had a visit from Ian Bland, celebrated Spanish Day, recognised the importance of Remembrance Day, supported Children in Need, hosted EYFS and KS1 Phonics workshops, and Christmas Craft Parent workshops and even squeezed a bit of fun in the snow too!

On the 23rd September, Ian Bland, who is a poet, visited us. He delivered a whole school assembly in which we joined in acting out his poems. Then each class had a workshop with Ian, where he taught us all about poetry and together we created our own poem. Finally, after all this hard work we performed the poems we'd created in front of the whole school! I think EYFS and KS1 were extremely brave!



On 11th October, Key Stage 1 took part in the whole school celebration of all things Spanish! We made Spanish flags, sang Spanish songs, listened to Spanish stories and learnt how to dance the flamenco! It was so much fun!

On Friday 15th November we all dressed up in yellow to support Children in Need. The children learnt all about the great work that is done and then completed some fun activities related to Children in Need. Thank you for all your support. As a school we raised £182.46!



Luckily or unluckily, we got snow! EYFS and KS1 had lots of fun exploring the texture and using their senses to describe it! Alongside some KS2 children, KS1 even attempted to build a snowman!

During the Autumn 2 term, EYFS and KS1 showcased their reading and phonics/spelling to their parents. Each class took part in a phonics or spelling lesson and then completed some activities with their parents. I would like to thank everyone who attended these workshops and the support and feedback we received on these.





On 11th November, Key Stage 1 remembered all the people who lost their lives fighting for our country. In Year 2 they wrote a story based on the BBC Poppies animation which sees The Great War experienced by the animal inhabitants of a WW1 battlefield.. They shared their facts and thoughts about Remembrance day including how they thought the poppies represent the 'soul' of each person. In Reception they created their own Poppy wreaths using red buttons and some children even created their own Poppy pictures at home. We then shared our reflections in assembly with the whole school. **"Lest we forget"**



[Click Here for the BBC Poppies Animation Link](#)

On Monday 9th December, EYFS, KS1 & KS2 invited all the parents to create a Christmas Christingle Craft in support of raising money for The Children's Society. They are a national charity working to transform the hopes and happiness of young people facing abuse, exploitation and neglect. They support them through their most serious life challenges and campaign tirelessly for the big social changes that will improve the lives of those who need hope most. The children had lots of fun making a Christingle and completing fun Christmas quizzes. Thank you in advance for all your support in this worthy cause!



Well done to everyone in EYFS and Key Stage One for all their hard work and achievements this term! I can't wait to see what Spring term fun will bring for EYFS and Key Stage One in the new year!

Mrs Collins – EYFS/KS1 leader and Assistant Principal

Phase Leader Update – KS2

This term, Key Stage 2 has been bursting with exciting learning and achievements! All of the children have shown incredible enthusiasm and creativity, and we're so proud of everything they've accomplished. Here's a look at some of the highlights from each class.

In Year 3, children have been working on some impressive projects. One of their standout achievements was writing excellent speeches about Martin Luther King Jr. The children explored his role in the Civil Rights Movement and reflected on his powerful message of equality, justice, and peace. Their speeches were thoughtful and inspiring, showing a deep understanding of such an important historical figure. Spanish Day was another highlight for Year 3, where the students embraced Spanish culture with enthusiasm. They practiced and performed flamenco dancing, showcasing their coordination, rhythm, and a lot of passion.



In Year 4, the children have been diving into the fascinating world of the Amazon Rainforest. They've explored its diverse ecosystems, animals, and the importance of preserving this incredible environment. In Design Technology, Year 4 has been busy making cam toys. The students used various materials and mechanisms to build toys with moving parts, developing their problem-solving abilities and hands-on skills. It's been a great term for Year 4, full of creativity.



Mrs. Wong's class have produced some excellent work. In Design Technology, the class turned their culinary skills into something delicious by making curries. They worked together to chop, mix, and cook up some very tasty dishes. It was a fun (and messy!) but what else is school about. Meanwhile, in Maths, Year 5 has been working hard on fractions. The children have been busy learning how to compare, add, and subtract fractions, and they are really getting the hang of it. All the children have made great progress with this tricky but important topic.

In Year 6, the focus has been on the powerful legacy of Nelson Mandela. The children have explored his role in fighting for justice and equality in South Africa and discussed how his leadership continues to inspire people around the world. The class has been reflecting on important themes such as forgiveness, resilience, and the value of standing up for what's right. At the end of the term, Year 6 also had the opportunity to hear from the local fire department, where they learned about fire safety and what to do in an emergency. Mr Roberts said all the children were very attentive and asked thoughtful questions.

Across Key Stage 2, all the students have been working hard on the songs for the end-of-term church service. It's been a joy to see them practicing and singing with such enthusiasm, and we can't wait to share their performances with parents and the wider community.

Overall, it's been a fantastic term of hard work and creativity in Key Stage 2. We're so proud of their efforts and look forward to seeing what they'll achieve in the term ahead.

Mr Walsh – KS2 leader and Deputy Principal

Curriculum Focus – Maths

The Importance of Practising Maths Facts at Home

As parents, you play a vital role in helping your child develop a strong foundation in mathematics. While school lessons are incredibly important, there's a lot you can do at home to support and reinforce the skills your child is learning. One of the most valuable ways to help your child build their confidence and ability in maths is by encouraging them to practise basic maths facts regularly.

Why Practise Maths Facts?

A key part of that puzzle is mastering the basic facts. These are the number bonds (such as knowing that $7 + 3 = 10$ or $6 + 4 = 10$). When children have these facts at their fingertips, they can focus more on solving problems and applying their maths skills in real-life situations. Practising these facts helps to build fluency and speed, which boosts confidence and reduces anxiety around maths.

Times Tables: More Than Just for the Year 4 Multiplication Table Check

In Year 4, students are expected to take part in the Multiplication Table Check (MTC), where they will need to quickly recall times tables up to 12×12 . This is an important milestone in their maths journey and can sometimes feel like a big challenge and using apps like Times Table Rockstars (TTRS) can really help. However, times tables are not just something to learn for a test—they form the foundation for so much more in mathematics.



Building a Strong Foundation for Life

Learning maths facts goes beyond just getting through school. Mathematics is everywhere in our lives - whether we are shopping, cooking, planning a holiday, or managing money. Having a solid understanding of basic maths facts gives children the tools they need to approach these situations with confidence and problem-solving skills.

How You Can Help at Home

So, how can you support your child in practising maths facts at home? Here are a few tips:

1. **Make it Fun:** Turn maths practise into a game. Use apps or websites that make learning times tables or number bonds fun, or create simple quizzes for your child to complete. You can even set challenges, like "How fast can you recall these facts?" to make it a bit of a competition.
2. **Daily Practise:** Just like learning to read or learning to play a musical instrument, practising maths facts a little bit every day can lead to great improvements. Just a few minutes a day can make a huge difference.
3. **Real-Life Application:** Look for ways to incorporate maths into everyday activities. Ask your child to help you with the shopping, or talk about how fractions and multiplication work when you are dividing food or measuring ingredients for cooking.
4. **Positive Reinforcement:** Celebrate their progress! Whether they have nailed their times tables or improved their recall speed, make sure to praise their efforts.

The importance of practising maths facts at home cannot be overstated. By helping your child develop fluency with number bonds, key facts, and times tables, you are giving them the tools they need to succeed not only in school but in everyday life. Remember, small and consistent practise at home makes a big difference over time. Together, we can help your child build a strong mathematical foundation that will last a lifetime.

Mr Walsh – Maths Leader

SENCO SPOTLIGHT

MASKING



Scan this QR code to watch a video that explains what autistic masking is. This video was shared with me in the Autism and wellbeing training I completed last year.



Masking is a term that started within the autistic community but can apply to all neurodivergent conditions including ADHD and Dyslexia. It describes the many ways that neurodivergent children, young people and adults use to camouflage their neurodivergent behaviours.

Masking can include:

- Hiding or not doing stims, tics or body movements they would usually find comforting or regulating
- Scripting conversations before they are in social situations
- Mimicking how others behave to make friends or fit in with friendship groups

Masking can happen for a variety of reasons, including:

- To be accepted
- To avoid prejudice, stigma, bullying and discrimination
- To meet social expectations and avoid social rejection
- To hide discomfort in environments that aren't autism friendly
- A lack of understanding or accommodation for neurodivergent characteristics
- To avoid punishment or negative attention at school
- To make or maintain friendships
- Because it has become routine

While we all have times when we might mask how we feel to get through the day, masking every day is not what we want children to do. Pretending to be something you are not can take up a lot of physical and emotional energy, and by the end of the day emotions will be running high!

If you think of a child masking like a bottle of fizzy drink and every time they mask being like the bottle being shaken, when you take the lid off, the drink can explode. It is common for children and young people that mask to have emotional outbursts at the end of the day. This can present as angry outbursts, tears or needing to be on their own.



If your child masks...

- Allow your child to have time to do nothing and recover after times you know they have been masking
- Think about the activities your child might like to do that allow them to be their authentic self - this could be exercise, sensory activities or focusing on their intense interests
- Make a note when you notice your child masking to be able to find patterns in the situations, places, and people they feel the need to mask in front of.
- Speak to their class teacher or Julie Mayers, the SENCO. Adjustments can be made at school and we can suggest strategies of support including sensory breaks, movement breaks, feeling check ins, emotion coaching, time out in quiet spaces and much more.

If your child doesn't mask..

- Please remind your child about the importance of acceptance and treating others with respect and compassion. So many people mask because they fear how they will be treated if they are their true authentic selves. Our vision at Discovery Academy is

'We believe in aspiration for all. **This means nurturing, supporting and developing every aspect of every single child in our care.** We want to create a world where the sky is the limit for all of our pupils; building pathways for all and focusing on personal and academic success and eventually progress to successful employment.'

Let's all work together to be aware of what makes us all unique and different and accept and celebrate this. My hope is for Discovery Academy to be a safe place for those who currently mask to un-mask, to proudly say 'This is me' and know that everyone in the Discovery Academy family is helping them to be the best that they can be!



If you would like to discuss or learn more about anything mentioned in this article, please get in touch with Mrs Mayers.

Email: jmayers@discovery.victoriousmat.org

Mrs Mayers – SENCO

Running Club

Our Discovery Striders running club is booming!

Another great start to running club this term, as usual we have a strong group of keen runners all 35 striders are full of enthusiasm and energy.

Every week our striders are all geared up and ready to learn and improve the positivity with-in the group is outstanding.

This term we have started off thinking about our fitness. We began with the beep test, we will do it again at some point next term to see if our fitness has improved, each one of our striders puts in 100% and are focused and enthusiastic so we are sure it will have.



Miss Goodson and Mrs Mayers

KS1 Lego club

This half term in Key Stage One, our fantastic Lego Club had an absolute blast! The classroom was buzzing with excitement as children used their imaginations to create all sorts of amazing things! From police boats zipping through imaginary waters to colourful houses standing tall and proud, every build was a new adventure.



The best part? Teamwork! Friends worked together, sharing ideas and bricks, as they built model cars and other creative masterpieces. It was wonderful to see children complimenting each other's designs and helping one another solve tricky problems. "Wow, that's brilliant!" and "Can I join in?" were just some of the cheerful phrases floating around the room.

As they laughed and built, the children were also learning valuable social skills. They practiced taking turns and listening carefully to one another. Lego isn't just about stacking bricks; it's about building friendships too!

At the end of the sessions, everyone gathered to show off their creations. Get ready to see some fantastic Lego masterpieces on display soon! We can't wait for next week's club—who knows what they'll build next!



Mrs Parkinson

Nursery

What an exciting start we have had in Nursery!



All the children have settled in well, made new friends and are working hard to follow the class rules. We have enjoyed the topics, All About Me and Nursery Rhymes.

The children have been working hard to follow the daily routine and embed Mr Potato Head's class rules. We have been counting, representing numbers in different ways and linking this to shape, size and measure.

We have worked hard on listening and re-telling stories. The children have particularly enjoyed reading 'Elmer' and 'The Colour Monster'. We have talked about our feelings and shared our worries with the Worry Monster. We have made positive relationships and already developed a sense of belonging.



We celebrated bonfire night and Diwali 'The festival of Light'. It was so nice to see so many parents join us at our story sessions and Diwali event.



The children have been very creative and enjoy focused and independent activities. I have been equally impressed with the fantastic home learning and amazing homework the children complete each week. Thank you to all our families for your support.

We learnt about Christianity and the meaning of Christmas. It was so lovely to watch the children

perform in the Nativity and see them grow in confidence.

We would love to wish you all a 'Merry Christmas'.

Mrs Kirkbride and Mrs Harrison



Reception

What a super start we have had in Autumn Term in Reception!

All the children have settled in well, made new friends, are learning the Reception Rules and trying hard to follow them. We always try our best to do 'Good Sitting, Good Looking for Learning and Good Listening. We have enjoyed the topics, All About Me and Light and Dark.

We have been counting to, representing numbers to five in different ways and subitising (saying how many without counting) to 3 then 5. We are getting better at naming and describing shapes, and creating our own patterns and pictures with a variety of

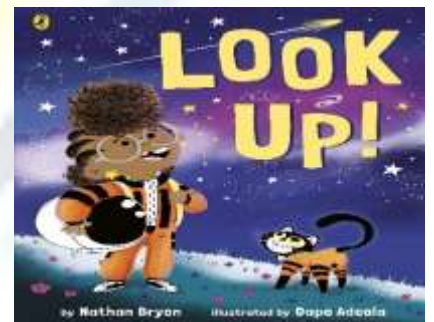


concrete resources.

We have observed seasonal changes from summer to autumn and autumn to winter. We even wrote our own poem about The Wind inspired by Shirley Hughes. We have also learnt about Nocturnal animals and animals that hibernate in winter.

The children have been very busy being creative and enjoyed a mix of focused and independent activities. We have loved creating transient art emotions faces and Poppies We have developed our representation in our painting; creating art inspired by stories we read and nature.

We are getting really good at oracy and listening. This has helped us to re-tell known stories.



Stories we have enjoyed are: Head to Toe, The Three Billy Goats Gruff, Chapatti Moon, It was a Cold Dark Night and Look Up!

We celebrated Bonfire night and Diwali 'The festival of Light'.



We learnt about Christianity and the meaning of Christmas. It was so lovely to watch the children perform in the Nativity and see them grow in confidence.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and an even Happier New Year!

Mrs Shenton, Mrs Lamb and Mrs Douglas

Mental Health and Wellbeing

At Discovery Academy we are incredibly lucky to have partnerships with outside physical and mental health support that enable our children to thrive and be at their very best.



Active Tameside have worked within our setting for quite some time and the children have wonderful rapport with the coaches. They encourage children to use physical movement to promote a healthy lifestyle, positive mental health and self-image as well as building on stamina, determination and self-discipline.

Here are examples of the activities that the children have access to provided by Active Tameside:

- PE – Coaching in Schools programme
- Bikeability – Cycle road safety programme
- School swimming – Curriculum

Here are some other kinds of support offered by Active Tameside that Miss Bentley-Dawson helps families with or that is offered within the community:

- Active Body Active Mind – mental wellbeing programme
- Fuel 4 Fun – funded school holiday camps
- Fuel 4 Fun Plus – Children's Health & Wellbeing Improvement programme
- Cook4Life – Family healthy eating programme
-



You can contact them for more information for your family using the link below:

Website: [Active Tameside | Gym, Swim, Fitness | Tameside Sports Trust](#)

Healthy Hyde are another outside agency that have made an invaluable difference to the way in which our children get care with mental health. We have been working with them for almost two years and we get constant positive feedback from the children and the families that work alongside the Healthy Mind Practitioner, Sam Bourke.



Children that are finding things hard to manage by themselves or are discovering new changes in life often need a little extra help. Sam works with a small group of children weekly and encourages self-esteem, positive self-image and supports team building within healthy friendships with fun activities and physical games. The children talk positively about the work that they do and there are improvements within mental health that are noticeable to the children in just a couple of weeks.

Healthy Hyde offer support to families as well as many local schools, such as food bank and housing support as well as mental health advice for young children and adults. They can be contacted by the following means:



Website www.healthyhyde.com

Phone [0161 368 5426](tel:01613685426)

Head Office Healthy Hyde, The Hub, Hattersley, Tameside SK14 6AF, GB

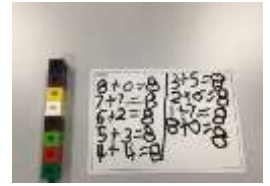
Mrs Bentley Dawson – Wellbeing Mentor

Year 1

Wow what a fantastic start to Year 1!



In Maths, we have been busy mastering our counting skills, counting forwards and backwards from different numbers within 100. We have used Numicon, tens frames, counters and cubes to build numbers and really understand the parts that make them. We have loved using our bead bars (Rekenreks) to make number bonds and have worked well in talk partners to recall our bonds to 10. We have finished the term naming and describing 2D and 3D shapes. We discovered they are hiding everywhere in our environment.



In English we have acted out stories set in the woods, taken an imaginary train ride through the countryside and have had a class visit from a naughty blue monster! From all these experiences we have written character descriptions, amazing stories like; 'Little Red Riding Hood and The Bus Ride' and we have written facts about Rosa Parks using our history knowledge too. We had fun writing Christmas Captions, labels and a very important list for Santa at the end of the term too! We loved seeing so many parents come to our Phonics workshop this term. Thank you.



In Science we have learnt all about our amazing bodies. We had fun learning our body parts whilst playing Simon Says and we even learnt about our internal organs and the jobs that they do. We have learnt all about Seasonal Changes and observed some very changeable weather through the window! We set up a rain gauge experiment to measure rainfall over two weeks and made wind socks to determine the strength of the wind.

We studied the life of Rosa Parks in History and empathized with her experiences through drama and roleplay. We really understood how she made a significant impact in History. We loved learning our class poem to explain her battle. We made timelines of her life and created diaries in role.



In Geography we have conducted lots of fieldwork finding objects in our school grounds using a map and then creating our own plans of a playground we could only dream of. We have created maps of our local walk to St. Barnabus Church and have learnt the names of the four countries of the UK. We found out that each country has a capital city and we created a fact poster to describe the human features of London.



In Art we have created pictures using spirals, learning that a circular motion can create the desired effect. We used different materials and tools to create different effects such as charcoals, pastels, chalks and paints. In DT we have designed and created moving Christmas cards using a slider mechanism. We linked our designs to the Christmas story we had learnt about in RE. We were very proud of our cards and couldn't wait to take them home!



What a super end to a very busy term!

Mrs Stokee, Mrs Wood and Mrs Buxton

Year 2

What an amazing Autumn term we have had in Year 2!

As the autumn half term draws to a close, Year 2 have been bustling with exciting learning activities across various subjects. From exploring captivating stories to creating artwork, the children have truly embraced the joy of learning.

In English, pupils have delved into enchanting texts featuring a peculiar friendship between a yeti and a bird. Although it is a misconception that a dragon appears in the story, students demonstrated their comprehension by sharing insightful thoughts about the characters and their adventures. Building on this, the children wrote imaginative postcards inspired by the story of Meerkat Mail, allowing them to practice their letter-writing skills while enhancing their creativity and understanding of narrative structure.



Maths lessons have focused on the fundamental concepts of place value, as well as addition and subtraction. Students have enthusiastically participated in engaging activities that reinforce these critical skills. Through practical exercises and playful games, they have developed a solid understanding of how to manipulate numbers, which will serve as a foundation for future mathematical learning.

Creativity flourished in art lessons, where the Year 2 pupils experimented with monoprints and created intricate drawings of leaves. Using a variety of techniques, they learned about the importance of texture and colour, culminating in a vibrant display of their unique artistic creations. These works of art have added a splash of colour to the classroom and showcased their growing artistic talents.

In Design Technology, students designed and constructed their very own fish mobiles. This project not only honed their crafting skills but also encouraged teamwork and problem-solving as they collaborated on this imaginative endeavour. The sewing skills demonstrated by the children have notably improved, allowing them to stitch together their creations with confidence and precision.

This half term has also seen exciting lessons in science, where Year 2 has explored various animals and their habitats, along with the properties of materials. Pupils have engaged in hands-on activities that sparked their curiosity and deepened their understanding of the world around them.

History classes have focused on the inspiring life of Walter Tull, where students have learned about his contributions and significance in society. This topic has provided a wonderful opportunity for the children to discuss themes of bravery and persistence.

Lastly, in geography, Year 2 students have embarked on a journey around the globe, studying the continents and oceans. They have improved their map-reading skills and gained an appreciation for the diverse environments our planet offers.



Year 2 has certainly enjoyed a vibrant and productive autumn half term, and we look forward to seeing what the next term has in store!

Mrs Parkinson, Mrs Qualters and Miss Hoque

Obi our School Dog

Hi everyone!

What a whirlwind year it's been! I've had so many new adventures that I can hardly keep track! First up, I got my first ever *official* school photo – the one where I'm looking all studious and professional. It's the kind of picture that says, "Yep, I'm ready to take on the world!" 🎓

Then there was my second Christmas dinner. Yup, I was lucky enough to join in the festive feast once again, and let me tell you, it was a *delicious* spread! I couldn't resist sneaking a few extra bites when no one was looking (oops!).



Another of the highlights was my first-ever visit to Santa Paws! It was such a fun experience, and I made sure to give Santa my wishlist (more treats and belly rubs, of course). 🐾🎅

Looking ahead to 2025, I've got big plans! I'm hoping to spend more time visiting classrooms and working closely with the children. They've been so kind to me, and I'd love to keep making their days even brighter! 🐾📖

I just want to say thank you from the bottom of my furry heart for all the cuddles, love, and visits this year! You've all made it so special, and I can't wait to see what the new year brings! Thank you to Miss Goodson and Miss Oldham for keeping me company and always brightening my day. Here's to more adventures, cuddles, and tail wags! 🐾



Giggles and Grow



Giggles and Grow is hosted every Friday at Discovery Academy. We provide opportunities for children to play and take part in crafts such as Remembrance Sunday wreath making, Halloween crafts, and Christmas crafts. The children enjoyed making baubles recently. We have welcomed many new faces.

All the children enjoy playing together, while the mums, dads and grandparents have a brew and chat.



A huge thank you to Natalie Jewitt and Michelle Heaton who have started this group for the local community. We are proud to support this group.

Year 3

We have had a fantastic first term!

In English we have written fiction and non-fiction pieces, including our own version of The True Story of the Troll from The Three Billy Goat's Gruff and writing persuasive letters to our classroom equipment. Also, we will be completing a poetry unit in the run up to Christmas. To support our work, we have been engaging in a mixture of spelling and phonics groups and this has helped all children to make positive steps towards their independent work. In guided reading we have looked at fiction and non-fiction texts and poetry. We have also been engaging well in our class novels. One of our favourites so far has been our Maths Test poem that we performed in front of Mrs Oldham and the rest of Key Stage 2.



In maths we have been focusing on place value, fractions, addition and subtraction. We have been working on column addition, subtraction and carrying over into the next column. We have also begun to look at making equal groups and sharing to answer multiplication and division problems. We have used counters to see the groups and have been using these resources to prove answers.

In Science, we have been looking at skeletons and the bones that support the vital organs we have in our body. We then compared our skeletons to different animal ones to see similarities and differences between them. We concluded our unit by looking at vertebrates and invertebrates and decided which animals would be able to survive in the jungle based on their anatomy. In Autumn Two we been looking at magnets and how they are useful in different ways. We observed different types of contact forces, how a type of surface can impact on the force needed to move an object and how magnetic forces are non-contact.

In our history lessons we have been learning about Martin Luther King Jr, the activist who campaigned for Civil Rights and we linked this with our prior knowledge of Rosa Parks. We have also written a speech in the style of Martin Luther King to inspire people to end discrimination.

In Geography this term we have been looking at the different countries and areas which make up the UK. We have also looked at how the UK is divided and were shocked to find that the more of our land is used for farming then for housing. We have then linked this to our DT sessions where we have looked at how to make bread using products from the UK and have designed loaves for our Breakfast Club.

In Art, we have looked at how to use charcoal in a variety of ways. Focussing on shading and pressure and seeing how that can change our overall piece. We also looked at natural objects and how we could use charcoal to mimic shadow and light.

A particular highlight of this term has been our incredible Spanish Day activity where we learned the Flamenco dance and had a guest story teller, who told us the story of Jack and the Giant Beanstalk in Spanish!



We have loved learning in Year 3 and can't wait to see the amazing learning that takes place in the Spring term! **Miss Crosby, Miss Goodson and Mrs Gardner**

Year 4

A fantastic start to our Year 4 journey!

The beginning of this academic year has certainly been remarkable for our Year 4 class at Discovery Academy. We have kicked off the year with a great start, delving into fascinating subjects while enriching our understanding of the world around us.

One of the highlights of our initial weeks was a visit from Mr. Asaturov, an authentic Australian who graciously shared his insights into the lives of Indigenous Australians.

The students were engaged and inspired as they learned about the unique culture, traditions, and history of this community. Mr. Asaturov's stories fostered an appreciation for the rich tapestry of indigenous life in Australia, serving as a gateway for the children to comprehend broader themes of heritage and identity.



Following this, our students shifted their focus to the Amazon Rainforest. Here, we discovered the myriad tribes that inhabit this breathtaking environment, many of which share similarities with Indigenous Australians. This exploration encouraged deep discussions about the importance of cultural diversity and the interconnectedness of different peoples around the globe. The lessons continued to evolve as we addressed the pressing issue of deforestation. Through interactive discussions, students began to comprehend the challenges.

In our science curriculum, we embarked on an exploration of the human digestive system. The students found it both fascinating and enlightening to learn about the journey food takes through our bodies and how essential nutrients are absorbed. To encourage a hands-on approach to learning, the class engaged in a rather humorous—yet educational—activity where they created their own representations of human waste. This engaging method reinforced the importance of digestion in a manner that the students found both memorable and entertaining.

Shifting gears, we then ventured into the world of sound. We explored how sound is produced through vibrations and how these vibrations vary, resulting in different pitches and volumes.



Maths has also been an area of focus, as the students have been diligently working to master their times tables. The journey has been one of persistence and enthusiasm, as our young mathematicians engage in games and activities designed to enhance their recall and understanding of multiplication. Their growing confidence in this crucial aspect of numeracy has been commendable.

Beyond the academics, our Year 4 students are currently preparing for the Young Voices concert, where they will perform alongside thousands of other children. They have been enthusiastically learning the songs and dance moves, an initiative that not only promotes teamwork but also enhances their performance skills. The excitement in the classroom is palpable as they look forward to showcasing their hard work.

In summary, our Year 4 class has made a stellar start to the academic year. With stimulating lessons ranging from Indigenous cultures to scientific exploration, and the joys of music, we are confident that our students will continue to thrive. We look forward to an exciting year ahead, brimming with knowledge, discovery, and personal growth. Let us all continue to support our young learners as they embark on this incredible journey!

Mrs Asaturov and Miss Slinger

Year 5

A Busy and Exciting Term for Year 5!

It's been an action-packed term in our class, filled with exciting projects, new challenges, and lots of learning! We've had some fantastic moments, and we are proud of all the children for their hard work and positive attitudes. Here's a look at what we've been up to this term.



One of the highlights has been our work in Design Technology, where the children have been busy making their own Indian Cuisine. This wasn't just about cooking – it was a wonderful opportunity to learn about healthy eating, measurement, and teamwork. The children included seasonal vegetables, learnt how to chop ingredients safely, and used their creativity to add their own twists to the dishes. It was a fantastic way to link practical skills with our wider learning, and of course, tasting the curry at the end was a real treat!

In maths, we've been tackling fractions, which proved to be quite challenging at first. However, with persistence and plenty of practice, the children have made impressive progress. They have worked hard to understand how fractions work, comparing and ordering them, and even learning how to add and subtract fractions. It's been great to see how they've grown in confidence, and they are now approaching fractions with much more assurance than when we started.

In English, the children have been creative writing. First, they wrote a story inspired by the book *Gorilla* by Anthony Browne. This beautifully illustrated story sparked some wonderful ideas and imaginative tales. It was fantastic to see how the children used their creativity to develop their own narratives, drawing on the themes of adventure and friendship.



We also delved into a picture book, *Float*, which led to even more imaginative storytelling. The children had a lot of fun coming up with their own stories, inspired by the mysterious floating boy in the book. Each story was unique, and the children demonstrated excellent skills in constructing interesting plots and engaging characters. Their creative thinking has truly shone through!

In music, we've been practising *Good King Wenceslas* for the Church Service and also performed at Tesco. The children worked hard to learn the song, focusing on the lyrics, rhythm, and melody. It was a special experience to perform at the church and then again in front of the community at Tesco. The children's voices were clear and confident, and they should be very proud of their performances.

Alongside all this, we have there has been an amazing sense of friendship, cooperation, and support in the class. The children have worked together on projects, helped each other with tricky tasks, and celebrated each other's successes.

It's clear that this term has been a busy one, full of learning, creativity, and growth. We are so proud of everything the children have achieved and look forward to seeing how they continue to shine in the next term! Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

We hope you have a wonderful fun filled Christmas!

Mrs Wong and Miss McBain



Year 6

Year 6 have started the year with incredible enthusiasm!

So far, we've delved into a variety of fascinating topics, including exploring South Africa and apartheid in History, diving into 2D-to-3D art inspired by Lubaina Himid, and investigating how we can build a more sustainable future in Geography. It's been a lively and jam-packed term, with plenty more to come—read on to discover what we've been up to!



In History, we've been uncovering the story of South Africa, learning about the challenges of living in a time marked by division and segregation. The children discussed the qualities that made Nelson Mandela such an extraordinary and influential leader. Meanwhile, in reading and English lessons, we travelled to ancient China through Philip Pullman's *The Firework Maker's Daughter*. Inspired by this text, the children created their own narratives, breaking down stereotypes and celebrating diverse perspectives from a variety of cultures. Across all their writing, Year 6 have embraced ambitious and exciting vocabulary to craft stories that truly captivate their readers.

From the very beginning, Year 6 have shown what they're capable of! Early in the term, we welcomed Active Tameside, who supported the children in achieving their Bikeability awards. Their maturity and awareness while learning to navigate roads safely left everyone impressed. But their achievements don't end there—it's been wonderful to celebrate successes outside of school as well, from football trophies to race medals. Year 6 have proven time and again that they can inspire one another to strive for their best, with just the right amount of friendly competition along the way.

We've also enjoyed some memorable events this term. The children participated in a fire safety talk, where they learned valuable lessons about staying safe at home and in the community. Additionally, we were visited by the hilarious poet Ian Bland, who had everyone in stitches with his witty poems. Inspired by Ian, the children created their own humorous poetry, discovering just how much fun writing can be. Let's not forget our amazing Spanish day, where the children learned some great Spanish dances and really 'took the bull by the horns'.

The learning journey hasn't stopped there. Year 6 have been working diligently to consolidate their knowledge from across Key Stage Two. In maths, they've been revisiting foundational concepts and diving deeper into processes such as place value, fractions, and the four main operations. Similarly, their reading and writing skills continue to grow as they tackle a variety of texts, ask thoughtful questions, and refine their use of literacy techniques. From crafting suspenseful moments in twisted fairy tales to using precise punctuation and engaging vocabulary, their writing has gone from strength to strength and Mr. Roberts cannot wait to see what the children come up with next!



Beyond the classroom, Year 6's kindness and leadership shine through in everything they do. Whether supporting peers in lessons or lending a hand to younger students, their caring attitudes have not gone unnoticed. The house captains, in particular, have embraced their roles with enthusiasm, and we hope to add to their responsibilities throughout the year by supporting with leading some events such as World Book Day.

Mr. Roberts has been continually amazed by Year 6's dedication and growth this year and is excited to see what the months ahead have in store!

Mr Roberts and Mrs Medcalf

Christmas 2024

Christmas Dinner



Since November 2024, Discovery Academy and Victorious Academies Trust have developed an 'in-house' catering package, which has seen some vast improvements to our service. As a result, Chloe (our Kitchen Manger) had the highest ever number of Christmas Dinners since we opened. Chloe and her team made the lunch a fabulous event, decorating the sweet trollies, wearing Christmas jumpers and providing a wonderful lunch for over 220 staff and children. **Thank you Chloe, Julie and Natalie.**



Christmas Fayre



This year we have had many new faces join the PTFA and supported by Mrs Collins, they created a fabulous Christmas Fayre on Friday 13th December. Father Christmas was in his Grotto with his very jolly Elf, there were games galore and some wonderful stalls to purchase lovely Christmas gifts.

The Fayre was a fantastic success raising £915 for the school. A huge thank you to all of the parents, family and friends who gave up their time to support this event.

Santa Dash

On the 17th December we did our annual Santa Dash. This was a real hit and a nice way to end our term with lots of laughter and sparkle. A number of staff and parents turned out to cheer us on which was wonderful. Thank you to everyone who supported the striders and we are really looking forward to 2025 and seeing how we progress and achieve more challenges. **Keep up the great work. We are proud of you all!**



Christmas singing at

TESCO

This year, Year 5 visited Tesco Hattersley to entertain the crowds. They certainly showed how they 'Sparkle and Shine' singing and dancing and being absolute fabulous ambassadors of Discovery Academy. **Well done Year 5 for raising £61.23 for school.**

Panto Time

We had a wonderful visit from 2 Boards and a Passion who performed pantomime for EYFS, KS1 and KS2. We were lucky to fund this, our Christmas party snacks and a gift for all children during the last few days though PTFA funds.



Curriculum Focus – Online Safety

In this article I want to signpost you to some useful websites to help you keep your child safe online

Pegi.com

This website allows you to search a game to know if it is suitable for the age of your child. It lets you know the risks within a game so you can make an informed decision about whether you allow your child to play it.



Common sense media

This website allows you to see reviews based on the age of your child as well as search different movies, TV shows, books, games, podcasts and apps

Google family link

This app links to your child's devices and allows you to control their screen time, see their location, approve and block apps being downloaded and guide your child to age-appropriate content



Internet matters

This website has guides about how to set parental controls for different devices as well as for different apps.

Have conversations about online safety, make it normal to discuss things that worry you or you are unsure about so your child know they can come to you for help. Be curious about what your child is doing online and set boundaries as you would with other activities with risks.

If you would like to discuss online safety concerns or need any help keeping your child, please get in touch with Mrs Mayers. Email: jmayers@discovery.victoriousmat.org

Discovery Academy Care Clubs

We recently welcomed a new member of staff to our ASC team- Miss Gorst is a great asset to ASC and Breakfast Club and we love having her as part of our team.

We were extremely excited to be told that we could have some new resources and equipment for ASC. We consulted the children and made lists and the children have absolutely loved playing with the new resources.



The new resources included 'Scoobie Strings;' kits for making bracelets and loom bands.

We chose new chess sets and a toy garage and cars. The older children chose a Football Guess Who game and a table fussball. The selection of fidget toys has also been very popular.

Thank you so much Mrs Oldham!

One of our Year 6 children, Marquez, asked if we could choose Pupils of the Week for ASC as we do within the rest of school. We thought that this was a fantastic idea and we now

choose a child from EYFS/KS1 and a child from KS2 each week. We look for children who demonstrate our school values during their time in ASC each week- for example- kindness and caring for others.

We have introduced craft activities into our timetable, which the children really enjoy. Some of the KS2 children have enjoyed supporting the younger children during these activities.

We wish you all a fabulous Christmas and can't wait to see you all in the new year.

Mrs Bradshaw- Cooper, Miss Begum, Mrs Harrison and Miss Gorst.



Christmas Victorious Voices

On 12th December, children from Year 4, 5 & 6 in our KS2 choir attended the Christmas Victorious Voices Concert. This event is hosted by Mrs Collins at Dukinfield Town Hall and is attended by children across all 13 schools within the Victorious Trust.



Our children in the choir were so committed as they have been practising every lunchtime since October with Mrs Asaturov. They chose the song I Don't Believe in Santa Claus which through song tells the funny story about how someone didn't believe in Father Christmas to begin with but by the end realised how important it is to hang their stockings and write their list for the magic to happen! The children gave a fantastic theatrical performance on the stage at Dukinfield Town Hall and made everyone at Discovery Academy very proud!

As part of Victorious Voices, our KS2 choir alongside the other schools came together and sang the group Victorious Trust song, All Over the World, to share the many different customs and traditions of how Christmas is celebrated across the world. The children sang their hearts out singing about the golden thread of Christmas – the birth of Jesus - and sharing the Christmas message regardless of how each nation celebrates Christmas.



Next year there will also be the opportunity for the KS2 choir to perform in Young Voices 2025, Summer Victorious Voices, TMS @ The Stoller Hall plus many others. Also, look out for KS2 and KS1 choir in-school performances too! I can't wait to see what our Discovery Academy choirs achieve and sing next!

Mrs Collins Victorious Academies Trust Music Ambassador

