Oakwood School
"Working Together"

Discoverers (Pre-formal)



Discoverers Pathway

Pre- formal

'Learning to experience and discover'

Overview

- Children working at **Pre-Formal** level are developing the earliest communication, cognitive and social interaction processes and skills.
- Access to learning is facilitated by their supportive adults to enable as greater independence as possible in all aspects of life.
- Learning is focussed on **building** and **securing experiences**.
- **Multi-sensory** in approach, including a wide range of therapies.
- Consistent routines with **personalised** cues to understand the world around them and support transitions.
- **Frequent repetition** with a **slower pace** suited to the learner.

Rationale

The Discoverers Pathway is designed to meet the needs of our children with the most complex, often multiple diagnoses. This is for children who are working at very early developmental levels and whose progress is significantly slower than that of their peers.

The Discoverers Pathway seeks to maximise pupil engagement and support outstanding personal progress across the four areas of need as set out in the SEND Code of Practice. We use these areas to structure a curriculum which ensures that pupils have access to motivating, relevant learning and developmentally appropriate activities:

- **Communication and Interaction** - The focus of which is to support the development of independence and communication skills. This ensures that pupils are able to indicate where their needs are being met and be able to socialise with peers and adults.

- **Cognition and Learning** - This includes the ability to be responsive to stimuli, to anticipate outcomes, to be persistent and to independently investigate. Through this, pupils develop critical thinking skills, including problem solving, representing ideas and understanding instructions - giving pupils the ability to process and interpret information in order to find out more about the world around them.

- **Sensory and Physical** -This includes exploration using the five senses, as well as fine and gross motor skills, vestibular awareness (balance) and proprioception (body awareness). Pupils are supported to learn how to control and organise their bodies and to explore their environment in a meaningful way. Pupils are supported to develop preferences and communicate these. They then may be able to self-regulate using sensory integration resources and techniques.

- **Social Emotional Mental Health** - This includes social and emotional literacy. Pupils are given opportunities to participate in cultural and religious experiences in a

meaningful way. Pupils learn to recognise and manage their emotions and to regulate their behaviour, supporting them to be an active member of their community: school, home and in the wider world.

Organisation of Learning

Children in our Discoverers Pathway experience their learning in a cross curricular way. We frame experiences through the use of songs, sensory stories and themes to provide cohesion across the classes as well as the motivating 'hook' for the learning experiences. The themes are adapted to promote understanding and recall through repetition of key vocabulary. They are adapted through a wide range of immersive sensory experiences.

Learning is delivered in a sensory and play-based approach in order to capture children's interests through meaningful and motivating activities. This gives opportunities to develop children's social skills through engagement with hands-on activities that they find enjoyable. Sensory play is a significant aspect of the curriculum, featuring heavily in the classroom provisions.

What learning looks like:

- Children's personalised learning targets are woven through the day. These are co-developed with a range of therapies, including speech and language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, our music specialist.
- Specialist approaches such as Intensive Interaction, MOVE, Sherborne, Rebound Therapy approach, including targeted therapies and interventions.
- Children will access learning activities with personalised objectives and outcomes to develop their own personalised skills.
- Children work towards their personalised objectives in a sequential way – developing independent achievement through adult modelling, sabotage and adult support which is reduced over time.
- A strong focus on functional communication, independence, sensory regulation and developing social skills.
- Clear routines for all children with visual aids/objects of reference and music to cue the children into transitions and the world around them.
- Personal care and self-help skills are embedded into the curriculum and routine.

Learning intentions are planned across the four curriculum areas, which is closely matched to the *Equals Pre-formal Curriculum,* to ensure a broad and balanced approach that is personal for each child.

Pupils' awareness of religious and cultural themes is promoted through themed weeks, covering an element of one of the six main religions and recognising the cultural diversity of the pupils in each individual class.

Success Indicators

Through the Discoverers Pathway we will see children …

- Develop secure attachments within school.
- Demonstrate a growing understanding of what is happening in their bodies, their minds and their surroundings and be able to communicate this.
- Increasing engagement with opportunities developing their social communication, emotional regulation and shared attention, as a result of which they will be happy and settled members of the school and home community.

- Be increasingly able to self-advocate through clearly demonstrating their likes and dislikes; towards managing personal safety.
- Make progress in a very individual way; this may be lateral as well as linear. Progress will be seen against their personal learning targets (home and school), EHCP targets, occupational/physiotherapy and speech and language targets.

Success and hard work are celebrated directly with parents through regular contact, more formal termly parent meetings and class blogs. They are shared with the school during our weekly celebration assemblies and are shared 1:1 with children themselves in a personalised way.