



A Primary Curriculum of Global Discovery

Revised April 2025



Intent

At Discovery Trust, we aim to deliver a research-based, inclusive curriculum where every pupil can flourish and develop a lifelong love for learning.

We strive for excellence in mastering the **fundamental skills** of reading, writing and maths, while providing a rich and balanced wider education. Our curriculum strikes a **balance between substantive knowledge and disciplinary skills**. This approach ensures that pupils not only understand and recall essential facts and information but also develop the ability to think critically and apply their knowledge. The Discovery curriculum **exceeds the ambition of the National Curriculum** while ensuring full coverage of statutory content.

We are committed to nurturing young people who **appreciate the wonder of the world** and are **environmentally and socially responsible**. Learning journeys include a strong focus on [sustainability challenges](#), helping pupils understand and address these issues by becoming 'change makers'.

Curriculum content **celebrates the diversity of communities** and includes the study of a wide-ranging balance of regions and cultures across the globe. This **global perspective** helps pupils develop a broader understanding of different societies, respect for others' viewpoints and a deep appreciation of faiths and beliefs. **Significant people** studied are carefully selected to promote **equity, diversity and inclusion, challenge stereotypes** and exemplify **protected characteristics**. The **British values** of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and celebration of difference are lived and embedded throughout our curriculum.

In addition, we aim to develop pupils for workplace roles that don't yet exist by **nurturing aspirations** and embedding best practice in the use of technology. We ensure that they become **technologically proficient and innovative**, exploring the **limitless learning** opportunities that this presents and preparing them well for their next step in education and beyond. By incorporating **21st century learning principles**, we ensure that our pupils are well-equipped to navigate and excel in an [ever-evolving technological landscape](#).







Furthermore, our curriculum focuses on empowering pupils to **communicate confidently**. Discovery Trust believes that all pupils should have a voice and be given the space to influence the world, learn from setbacks and develop the resilience and optimism that they need to succeed.

For the academic year 2025-26, content has been reviewed in line with the [aims of the curriculum review \(2024\)](#) and [sustainability leadership and climate action plans for education \(Gov, Sep '24\)](#).



Ensuring our pupils are ready for the 21st Century world

For our pupils to successfully live, learn, and work in the 21st century, they must develop a range of skills and competencies in addition to core subject knowledge. To thrive in the modern workplace, pupils will need to be continuously learning and gaining new skills throughout their careers. The Discovery Curriculum applies the dimensions of 21 Century Lesson Design (21CLD) to help our pupils become flexible, adaptable and lifelong learners.

Domain	Summary
 Knowledge Construction	In the Knowledge Construction dimension, learners are required to construct and apply knowledge. When learners apply their knowledge in new contexts, they practise critical thinking and learn how to adapt their current knowledge to new situations. Additionally, interdisciplinary learning activities help learners connect content to deepen their understanding.
 Collaboration	The Collaboration dimension develops learners' ability to work with others. They gain valuable negotiation skills by sharing responsibility and making substantive decisions together. When their work is interdependent, learners also learn the importance of teamwork.
 Real-World Problem Solving and Innovation	The Real-World Problem Solving and Innovation dimension prepares learners for life in our ever-changing society. By working with problems without a previously learned solution, learners practice creative thinking and problem solving. When they're exposed to authentic, real-world problems, learners practise the same critical and creative thinking skills they will need when they enter the workforce. And, when learners implement their solutions in the real world, they gain confidence in their abilities to solve complex problems for specific audiences.
 Skilled Communication	In today's globally-connected and conflicted society, the Skilled Communication dimension is more important than ever. When we teach our pupils to support their communication and substantiate their claims with evidence, they develop the power to persuade others and create change. They practise the vital skill of flexible thinking by designing communications for specific audiences. By developing their communication skills, learners also gain insight into how others communicate with them and become more discerning when consuming information themselves.
 Self-Regulation	The Self-regulation dimension prepares learners for the fast-paced and autonomous work environment of the 21st century. Learners practise executive functioning skills by planning, monitoring and revising their work.
 ICT for Learning	When learners use ICT for learning , they learn how to use the technology all around them for authentic, deep learning. They also develop marketable skills by working with a variety of tools to create ICT products for a real audience.

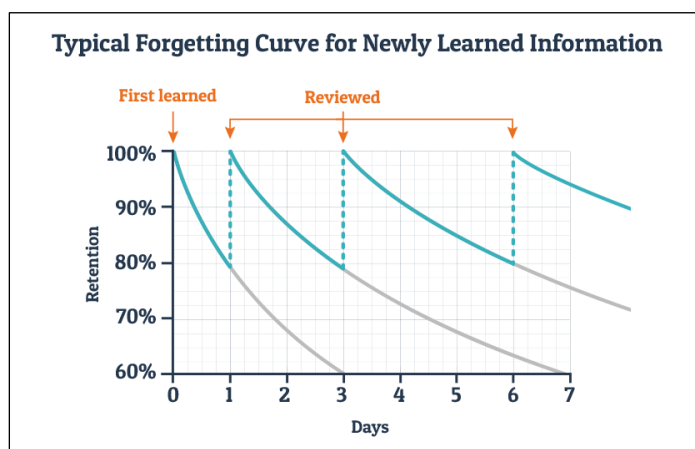


Implementation

How is our curriculum planned?

The Discovery curriculum is **spiral** in nature, revisiting and building upon concepts systematically to ensure pupils know more and remember more over time. Learning journeys are subject-led with **explicit connections made between disciplines** to develop depth in understanding. For example, the water cycle is studied in geography alongside changes in states of matter in science to ensure pupils fully understand the concept of 'evaporation'. **Core vocabulary** is included on planning and developed deliberately over time.

Learning sequences and individual lessons begin with revisiting prior learning, before teaching new content using **explicit instruction**. Core learning is revisited over time using **spaced retrieval** to strengthen memory. For example, science, history and geography unit plans include a series of low-stakes retrieval quizzes for teachers to use at the end of a unit as well as weeks, months and years later. This ensures pupils retain core knowledge, vocabulary and skills over time and **misconceptions** are picked up and **addressed promptly**.



The EEF's [5-a-day principles](#) are used to support all pupils to access the curriculum through **adaptive teaching**. A range of scaffolding is provided to facilitate this, including stem sentences to develop oracy and communication and assistive technology. These are explained in further detail within the Teaching and Learning and PedTech frameworks ([hyperlinks here](#)).

Teaching staff adjust lessons using assessment for learning to meet the needs of classes, groups and individuals. For this reason, the Discovery curriculum focuses on WHAT to teach, giving agency at school and teacher level to decide HOW to deliver it. Learning journeys include 'steps' rather than 'lessons' to emphasise the importance of teacher agency in deciding when to move on.

Objectives are balanced between **substantive knowledge** and **disciplinary skills**, to ensure pupils build factual knowledge as well as subject-specific skills. For example, in history, pupils learn about the key events of the Gunpowder Plot alongside how sources of evidence such as the 'Bag of Secrets' are used to tell us about the past. Substantive and disciplinary knowledge form the basis for progression across the curriculum.

In science, history and geography, the Discovery curriculum **signposts National Curriculum content** and includes an **embedded assessment framework**. Learning journeys are **enriched with Discovery-specific content**, aligned to the vision and values of the Trust, to ensure that our pupils receive a first-class education.



Each subject area has a **clear progression model**. This model outlines the precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary expected to be secured by pupils in each year group or unit of work. Close attention has been paid to ensuring there is **academic fidelity to individual subject disciplines** and that these align with the purpose and aims of each subject, as described in the [National Curriculum](#), in addition to [Ofsted's curriculum research reviews](#).

Expectations for teaching in KS1 and KS2

In Key Stage One, pupils explore their understanding of non-core subjects whilst having the opportunity to apply their early reading, writing and mathematics skills effectively. This ensures that pupils have the skills they need to access the curriculum at a deeper level in Key Stage Two.

Key Stage 1 Weekly Curriculum Time Guide:

English	8 hrs	RE+	1hr	Music*	30m
Maths	5 hrs minimum	History/Geog	1-2 hrs	Computing	Up to 1hr
Science	1 hr	Art or D&T	Up to 1hr	PE	Up to 2hrs
PSHE+	30m	Total 21-22hrs			

Key Stage 2 Weekly Curriculum Time Guide:

English	7 hrs 30m	RE+	1hr	Music*	30m
Maths	5 hrs minimum	History/Geog	1-2 hrs	Computing	1hr
Science	1 hr	Art or D&T	1hr	PE	2hrs
PSHE+	30m	MFL (KS2 only)	30m	Total 21-22hrs	

*plus 30m weekly singing assembly

+ non-church schools may spend 45m each on RE and PSHE

Assuming 5 hours of lesson time per day, this model allows:

- 3-4 hours per week for other school activities e.g. assemblies/worship, story time, swimming
- Alternating between Art and Design Technology every six weeks (three 6-hour units per subject)
- Schools have the choice of alternating between History and Geography every 9 weeks (two 9-hour units per subject) or teaching both subjects weekly. The latter option has three 9-hour units per subject, allowing up to 4 additional hours per unit to embed, consolidate and apply learning.



How do we challenge our pupils?

The Discovery curriculum provides learning challenges throughout the academic year that require pupils to apply their learning, solve problems, work creatively and express their knowledge and understanding effectively across the curriculum. Learning Journeys are designed to give pupils opportunities to develop deeper interconnected conceptual understanding and this is exemplified for teachers within planning.

School-level Curriculum Adaptations

At Discovery Trust, we recognise that all schools have unique contexts. Therefore, whilst we have an aligned curriculum vision and implementation structure, we encourage schools to adapt curriculum content to their local context.

For example:

- **Geographical variances** within the local area: e.g. schools in Rutland may study Rutland Water, whilst those in Charnwood study Cropton Reservoir.
- **Local history studies**, considering the locality of the school
- **Local artists**
- **Local businesses**
- **Local feeder schools** such as the local secondary schools and pre-schools
- **Community demographics** should be considered within the RE and MFL curriculum.

Enrichment

Discovery Schools Trust is committed to providing a rich educational offer for all pupils. Long-term planning signposts a range of ways that schools can enhance their learning through trips, visitors and the use of digital devices, including VR headsets, as well as using blended technology to access asynchronous specialist teaching content and facilitating online collaboration between schools.