

Three Counties Academy Trust



Equality Information and Objectives Policy

#A13

Last updated: 01 October 2022

Review Date: 31 August 2023

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Statement of intent

Three Counties Academy Trust recognises that certain groups in society can be disadvantaged because of unlawful discrimination they may face due to their race, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, religion/belief, sexual orientation, or age.

This policy will put in place a range of actions we will follow to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the Trust community and workforce.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

This policy also has due regard for non-statutory guidance, including the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Equal Opportunities Policy: Pupils
- Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy
- Data Protection Policy

The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

For the purpose of this policy, the Equality Act 2010 will be referred to as 'the Act'. Three Counties Academy Trust fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities. Protected characteristics, under the Act, are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Race, colour, nationality, or ethnicity
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a Trust or school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions
- In the way it provides education for pupils
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility, or service
- By suspending or excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment

The responsible body for the Trust is the proprietor.

The Trust's liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the Trust, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between Trust and pupil, such as the provision of references on former pupils or access to "old pupils" communications and activities.

Three Counties Academy Trust will promote equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants and will work in line with our Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

2. Principles and aims

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents, as of equal value, regardless of any protected characteristic. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences in life-experience, outlook, and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic.

Three Counties Academy Trust will:

- Promote **race equality** and have due regard to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups
- Promote **disability equality**, ensuring equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and disability-related harassment, and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life
- Promote **gender equality** by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, and promote the equality of opportunity amongst individuals of all genders

Transgender people are explicitly covered by the PSED. For the purposes of this policy, the term '**transgender**' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Three Counties Academy Trust will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the community.

The Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system. Three Counties Academy Trust will ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations. The Trust's Admissions Policy will not discriminate against any protected characteristic in any way.

Three Counties Academy Trust will:

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, given necessary training and support, and report progress to the Trust Board

- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity is sufficiently scrutinised
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, and ensure this is promoted in our policies, procedures, and activities
- Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention, and development, and ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of any protected characteristic, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity
- Reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist
- Engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy, procedure or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones
- Ensure that policies, procedures, and activities benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in the public life of everyone, regardless of any protected characteristic
- Ensure staff promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the Trust, challenging inappropriate language and behaviour, responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, and showing appropriate support for pupils with additional needs, maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equality

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board will:

- Ensure that the Trust complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations
- Meet its obligations under the PSED to:
 - Publish equality objectives at least every four years commencing on the date of the last publication
 - Update and publish information every year to demonstrate Trust compliance with the PSED
- Ensure that the Trust's policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans
- Ensure that the Trust's Admissions Policy does not discriminate in any way
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the Trust Board
- Proactively recruit high-quality applicants from under-represented groups
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy

The Executive Headteacher will:

- Implement this policy and its procedures
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their induction and CPD
- Ensure that all parents, visitors, and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the provisions of this policy
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance

- Produce an annual report on the progress of implementing the provisions of this policy and report it to the Trust Board

Staff will:

- Be mindful of any incidents of harassment or bullying in the Trust
- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying and report any major breaches of the policy to the Executive Headteacher
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the Trust's culture
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way
- Monitor pupils' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place
- Keep up to date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training

Pupils will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other pupil or staff member
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the Trust by contributing their cultural experiences and values
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to the head of year or to another member of staff
- Abide by all the Trust's equality and diversity policies, procedures, and codes
- Trust school's will have an equality page on their websites, in order to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED in the Equality Act 2010, and advancing equality of opportunity

4. Equality objectives

Three Counties Academy Trust is committed to promoting the welfare and equality of all its staff, pupils, and other members of the Trust community.

To achieve this, we have established the following objectives:

- Monitor changes to the curriculum to ensure they result in good outcomes for pupils in all vulnerable groups, and to review the curriculum considering new performance measures
- Offer appropriate qualifications in English for pupils in all vulnerable groups
- Implement effective strategies to support pupils in all vulnerable groups following linear exam courses
- Improve the quality of support for pupils in all vulnerable groups in the classroom
- Continue to explore the use of new technologies to support pupils in all vulnerable groups in accessing their learning. With special investigation taking place regarding the use of technology in modern foreign languages, internal exams, and group work
- Work actively with staff and pupils to ensure their diversity is recognised, protected, and celebrated

Three Counties Academy Trust will regularly review the steps being taken and the progress made towards the achievement of these objectives and, in line with the specific duties of the PSED, publish this information on the Trust website every year. The Trust will update and publish its equality objectives at least every four years.

5. Collecting and using information

In accordance with the requirements outlined in the Data Protection Act 2018, personal data will be lawfully collected and processed in line with the principles and practices outlined in the Data Protection Policy and only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, e.g., to comply with the Trust's legal obligations.

Three Counties Academy Trust will collect equality information for the purpose of:

- Identifying key issues, e.g., unlawful discrimination in teaching methods
- Assessing performance, e.g., benchmarking against similar organisations locally or nationally
- Taking action, e.g., adapting working practice to accommodate the needs of staff who share protected characteristics

We will build an equality profile for staff to assist with identifying any issues within their recruitment regime. We will obtain the following information from our staff:

- Recruitment and promotion
- Numbers of part-time and full-time staff
- Pay and remuneration
- Training
- Return to work of women on maternity leave
- Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disabilities
- Appraisals
- Grievances (including about harassment)
- Disciplinary action (including for harassment)
- Dismissals and other reasons for leaving

Three Counties Academy Trust will use the information we obtain to analyse any gaps present in our equality documentary evidence, including the Equal Opportunities Policy: Pupils and Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

6. Publishing information

Three Counties Academy Trust will publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the Act. The Trust will publish information relating to persons within the Trust community who share relevant protected characteristics, these will include:

- Other persons affected by the Trust's policies and procedures

The Trust will not provide this information if:

- The employee is employed under contract personally to do work

- The employer does not have, and it is not reasonably practicable for the employer to obtain the data

The Trust will publish findings on our website.

Three Counties Academy Trust will update its equality objectives at least every four years and publish on the individual school websites. The Trust will publish information every year which will show the progress made towards the achievement of the equality objectives.

7. Promoting equality

In order to meet our objectives, Three Counties Academy Trust has identified the following priorities:

- The Trust will provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled pupil's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, so they can integrate wholly in all parts of Trust life
- Staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the Trust will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic
- The Trust will ensure that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying is taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly
- There will be a clearly defined disciplinary system stipulated in the Conduct for Learning Policy, which will be consistently enforced
- The Trust will increase access for disabled children and young people to the Trust curriculum and will take necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, enabling them to take as full a part as possible in the activities of the Trust
- The Trust will ensure there is adequate access to the physical environment of the Trust
- The Trust will improve the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people
- The Trust will seek the views of advisory staff, outside agencies and local schools
- Throughout the year, the Trust will plan ongoing events to raise awareness of equality and diversity

Three Counties Academy Trust will consult with stakeholders to establish equality objectives and draw up a plan based on information collected on protected groups and accessibility planning.

Any reports of bullying and prejudice will be carefully monitored and dealt with accordingly.

Annual training will be given to all staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.

8. Addressing prejudice-related incidents

Three Counties Academy Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice. We will ensure that pupils and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice. We will address any incidents immediately and, where appropriate, report them to the Trust Board and/or the LA.

9. Complaint's procedures

Three Counties Academy Trust aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage and is dedicated to continuing to provide the highest quality of education possible throughout the procedure. Any person, including a member of the public, is able to make a complaint about the provision of facilities or services that the Trust provides.

The Trust will adhere to the Complaints Policy and Procedures to ensure a straightforward, impartial, non-adversarial process, which allows a full and fair investigation, respects confidentiality and delivers an effective response and, appropriate redress. If a complaint has completed the Trust's process and the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to appeal, as outlined in the Complaints Policy and Procedures.

Three Counties Academy Trust works to develop good professional relationships between colleagues; however, we understand that sometimes conflicts may arise. Through maintaining open communication, we want our staff to feel able to raise any grievances so that appropriate and effective solutions can be put in place. Grievances raised by staff members will be processed in accordance with our Grievance Policy.

10. Curriculum

All pupils will be entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need.

When planning the curriculum, we will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality. When teaching the curriculum, we will promote equality and will not subject individuals to discrimination. The Trust will develop an appropriate curriculum for all pupils in all vulnerable groups and will ensure PSHE lessons are designed for pupils to develop their knowledge of the world and the importance of equality.

11. Monitoring and review

The Executive Headteacher will review this policy annually, to ensure that all procedures are up to date. The policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Executive Headteacher and Trust Board in the following ways:

- Individual attainment data
- Equal opportunities recruitment data
- Equality impact assessments
- Ofsted inspection judgements on equality and diversity
- Incident records related to harassment and bullying
- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff

Signed by:

_____ Executive Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of Trustees Date: _____