

Three Counties Academy Trust



# Accessibility Policy

## #A1

Last updated: 01 September 2022

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## **Statement of intent**

Three Counties Academy Trust is committed to taking all steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage and works closely with pupils with disabilities, their families, and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove any potential barriers to their learning experience.

The Trust is active in promoting an inclusive, positive environment by ensuring that every pupil in each of our schools is given equal opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy school life. The Trust continually looks for ways to improve accessibility within our school's through data collection, parent questionnaires and discussions.

This policy must be adhered to by all staff members, pupils, parents, and visitors.

## **1. Legal framework**

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

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 1996
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- Early Years Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- School Development Plan
- Data Protection Policy

## **2. Definitions**

A person is defined as having a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial, and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the Trust does not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage, or civil partnership.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The Trust Board will be responsible for:

- Monitoring the Accessibility Plan

- Approving the Accessibility Plan before it is implemented

The Executive Headteacher will be responsible for:

- Working closely with the Safeguarding and Inclusion Executive Leader, Trust Board, LA, and external agencies to effectively create and implement the Trust's Accessibility Plan

The Safeguarding and Inclusion Executive Leader will be responsible for:

- Creating an Accessibility Plan with the intention of improving the school's accessibility, in conjunction with the Trust Board
- Ensuring that staff members are aware of pupils' disabilities and medical conditions where necessary
- Establishing whether a new pupil has any disabilities or medical conditions which the school should be aware of
- Consulting with relevant and reputable experts if challenging situations regarding pupils with disabilities arise
- Working closely with the Executive Headteacher, Trust Board, LA, and external agencies to effectively create and implement the Trust's Accessibility Plan

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Working closely with the Safeguarding and Inclusion Executive Leader and Trust Board to ensure that pupils with SEND are appropriately supported

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy and the Accessibility Plan at all times
- Ensuring that their actions do not discriminate against any pupil, parent, or colleague

All staff members and governors will partake in whole-school training on equality issues related to the Equality Act 2010. Designated staff members will be trained to effectively support pupils with medical conditions, for example, understanding how to administer insulin, in line with the Administering Medication Policy.

## **4. Accessibility Plan**

The Trust's Accessibility Plan demonstrates how access will be improved for pupils with disabilities, staff, parents, and visitors to the Trust within a given timeframe. It will be presented as a freestanding document. The Accessibility Plan will be structured to complement and support the school's Equality Information and Objectives Policy, as well as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

The plan has the following key aims:

- To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- To improve and maintain the Trust schools physical environment to enable pupils with disabilities to take advantage of the facilities and education on offer
- To improve the availability and delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents, and visitors with disabilities

The intention is to provide a projected plan for a three-year period ahead of the next review date, which will be in August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025. If it is not feasible to undertake all the plans/works during the lifespan of the Accessibility Plan, some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The Trust will provide adequate resources for implementing plans, ensuring pupils are sufficiently supported.

The Accessibility Plan will be used to measure the necessity of making reasonable adjustments in order to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities where practicable. It will be used to advise other Trust planning documents and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

An access audit will be undertaken by the Trust Board and Safeguarding and Inclusion Executive Leader every year.

During Ofsted inspections, the inspectorate may include the Trust's Accessibility Plan as part of their review. Both this policy and the Accessibility Plan will be published on the Trust and individual school websites.

## **5. Equal opportunities**

The Trust strives to ensure that all existing and potential pupils are given the same opportunities, and is committed to developing a culture of inclusion, support, and awareness. The Accessibility Plan will detail any barriers which are hindering the opportunities for pupils with SEND. The aim of the plan is to take appropriate measures in order to overcome these barriers, allowing all pupils equal opportunities.

Staff members will be aware of any pupils who are at a substantial disadvantage and will take the appropriate steps to ensure the pupil is effectively supported. Wherever possible, teaching staff will adapt their lesson plans and the curriculum to allow all pupils to reach their full potential and receive the support they need. Individual schools will ensure that all extracurricular activities are accessible to all pupils and make reasonable adjustments to allow pupils with SEND to participate in all school activities.

## **6. Admissions**

The Trust will act in accordance with its Admissions Policy. The same entry criteria will be applied to all pupils and potential pupils.

The Trust will strive to not put any pupil at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments prior to the pupil starting at a Trust school. All pupils, including those with SEND, will have appropriate access to all opportunities available to any member of the school community.

Information will be obtained on future pupils in order to facilitate advanced planning. Prospective parents of statemented pupils, and pupils with SEND, are invited to a transition meeting prior to the pupil starting school in order to discuss the pupil's specific needs.

## **7. Curriculum**

The Trust is committed to providing a healthy environment that enables full curriculum access and values and includes all pupils regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, and emotional needs. No pupil is excluded from any aspect of the school curriculum due to their disabilities or impairments. The Trust aims to provide a differentiated curriculum to enable all pupils to feel secure and make progress.

Middle Leaders and the SENCO will work together to adapt a pupil's Individual Education Plan (IEP), with advice sought from outside agencies where appropriate, to allow all pupils to reach their full potential.

Where areas of the curriculum present challenges for a pupil, these are dealt with on an individual basis. The class teacher, in discussion with the pupil and their parents, will ensure that all adjustments possible, in line with common sense and practical application, will be made for any disability or impairment. Physical education lessons will be adapted, wherever possible, to allow pupils with disabilities to participate in lessons.

There are established procedures for the identification and support of pupils with SEND in place at Trust schools. Detailed pupil information on pupils with SEND are given to relevant staff in order to aid teaching, e.g., 'pupil passports'.

Specialist resources are available for pupils with visual impairments, such as large print reading books. Learning support assistants are deployed to implement specific literacy, numeracy, and speech programmes.

## **8. Physical environment**

The Trust is committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff members, parents and visitors have equal access to areas and facilities within Trust premises. There are no parts of any Trust school to which pupils with disabilities have limited or no access to, though special arrangements to access some rooms and facilities may be required.

Each school has toilet facilities suitable for people with disabilities which are fitted with a handrail and an emergency pull cord. There are provisions for nappy changing.

Where entrances to the school are not flat, a ramp is supplied for access. Wide doors are fitted throughout the school to allow for wheelchair access. The corridor flooring and lighting is designed to support those who are visually impaired.

## **9. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or when new legislation or guidance concerning equality and disability is published. The Trust Board and Executive Headteacher will review the policy in collaboration with the Safeguarding and Inclusion Executive Leader.

Equality impact assessments will be undertaken as and when Trust and school policies are reviewed.

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Executive Headteacher Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Trustees Date: \_\_\_\_\_