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Loaning TCAT Equipment Policy

#FI18

**Last amended 20th March 2025**

**To be reviewed no later than August 31st 2028**

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**Common abbreviations and acronyms**

|  |  |  |  |
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| **AA** | Admissions Authority | **GIAS** | Get Information about Schools |
| **AAI** | Adrenaline Auto-Injector (Epi Pen) | **GPA** | Government Procurement Arrangement |
| **ACM** | Asbestos Containing Materials | **HASH** | Herefordshire Association of Secondary Heads |
| **AFH** | Academies Financial Handbook | **HBV** | Honour Based Violence |
| **AHT** | Assistant Headteacher | **HR** | Human Resources |
| **AIR** | Attendance Intervention Reviews | **H&S** | Health and Safety |
| **APIs** | Application Programme Interfaces | **HoS** | Head of School |
| **BAME** | Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds | **HSE** | Health and Safety Executive |
| **BCP** | Business Continuity Plan | **ICO** | Information Commissioners Office |
| **BFR** | Budget Forecast Return | **IHP** | Individual Healthcare Plan |
| **CAMHS** | Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services | **IRMS** | Information and Records Management Society |
| **CEO** | Chief Executive Officer | **IWF** | Internet Watch Foundation |
| **CFO** | Chief Financial Officer | **KCSIE** | Keeping Children Safe in Education |
| **CIF** | Condition Improvement Fund | **KS1/2/3/4** | Key Stage 1/2/3/4 |
| **CIN** | Child in Need | **LAC** | Looked After Child |
| **CLA** | Children Looked After | **LADO** | Local Authority Designated Officer |
| **CMIE** | Child Missing in Education | **LGB** | Local Governing Body |
| **COO** | Chief Operating Officer | **LLC** | Low-Level Concerns |
| **COSHH** | Control and Substances Hazardous to Health | **LSA** | Learning Support Assistants |
| **CP** | Child Protection | **MASH** | Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub |
| **CPD** | Continuing Professional Development | **MAT** | Multi-Academy Trust |
| **CSCS** | Children’s Social Care Services | **MFA** | Multi-Factor Authentication |
| **CSE** | Child Sexual Exploitation | **MFL** | Modern Foreign Language |
| **CTIRU** | Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit | **NCSC’s** | National Cyber Security Centres |
| **CWD** | Children with Disabilities | **NPQEL** | National Professional Qualification in Executive Leadership |
| **DBS** | Disclosure and Barring Service | **PA** | Persistent Absence |
| **DDSL** | Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead | **PAN** | Published Admission Number |
| **DfE** | Department for Education | **PECR** | Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations |
| **DHT** | Deputy Headteacher | **PEP** | Personal Education Plan |
| **DSE** | Display Screen Equipment | **PEEP** | Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan |
| **DSL** | Designated Safeguarding Lead | **PEx** | Permanent Exclusion |
| **DPO** | Data Protection Officer | **PLAC** | Previously Looked After Child |
| **EAL** | English as an Additional Language | **PP** | Pupil Premium |
| **ECT** | Early Career Teacher | **PSHE** | Personal, Social and Health Education |
| **EHA** | Early Help Assessment | **PSED** | Public Sector Equality Duty |
| **EHCNA** | Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment | **PTFA** | Parent, Teacher and Friends Association |
| **EHCP** | Education, Health and Care Plan | **RHE** | Relationships and Health Education |
| **EHE** | Elective Home Education | **RSHE** | Relationships, Sex and Health Education |
| **ELSA** | Emotional, Literacy and Support Assistant | **SALT** | Speech and Language Therapist |
| **ELSI** | Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion | **SARC** | Sexual Assault Referral Centre |
| **ESFA** | Education and Skills Funding Agency | **SBM** | School Business Manager |
| **EVC** | Educational Visit Coordinator | **SCCs** | Standard Contractual Clauses |
| **EWO** | Education Welfare Officer | **SDQ** | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire |
| **EYFS** | Early Years Foundation Stage | **SEMH** | Social, Emotional, and Mental Health |
| **FBV** | Fundamental British Values | **SENCO** | Special Educational Needs Coordinator |
| **FGM** | Female Genital Mutilation | **SEND** | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities |
| **FOI** | Freedom of Information | **SLA’s** | Service Level Agreements |
| **FSM** | Free School Meals | **STEM** | Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths |
| **FTS** | Find a Tender Service | **TA** | Teaching Assistant |
| **GAG** | General Annual Grant | **TCAT** | Three Counties Academy Trust |
| **GDPR** | General Data Protection Regulation | **VSH** | Virtual School Headteacher |
| **RIDDOR** | Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations |  |  |

**Statement of intent**

Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT) is dedicated to providing pupils with the best education possible. We understand the key role technology plays in maximising pupils’ access to learning, as well as making lessons more exciting and engaging. We are committed to ensuring pupils have access to the necessary facilities to carry out their work, and believe it is important for pupils to be confident and competent users of equipment and the resources they access.

Staff, pupils and parents are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and TCAT’s Acceptable Use Agreementbefore borrowing any TCAT equipment. Copies of the agreement and this policy will be made available on request.

# Legal framework

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

* Data Protection Act 2018
* The UK General Data Protection Regulation
* DfE (2024) ‘Keeping children safe in education 2024’
* DfE (2023) ‘Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges’

Where legislation has been passed or updated during the shelf life of this policy, we will always apply the latest version available irrespective of the version quoted here.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

* Data Protection Policy (FI20)
* Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (SG1)
* Online Safety Policy (SG43)
* Debt Recovery Policy (FI4)

And the following internal documents:

* ICT Curriculum Policy/Plan
* Acceptable Use Agreements
* Device Loan Agreements

Central TCAT policies have the policy number identified, e.g. “SG1”. Where no policy number is identified this indicates the policy is a school specific policy available from an individual TCAT school’s website.

# Roles and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for oversight of the equipment and loaning process lies with the Headteacher/Head of School who must discuss any loan of equipment in advance with a member of the Executive Leadership Team for indicative approval.

The Headteacher/Head of School will then make decisions regarding:

* The allocation and provision of resources, taking into consideration recommendations from the Executive Leadership Team
* How the equipment is utilised to benefit the aims and objectives of TCAT and their school

As appropriate, the Trust Estate Manager or the ICT Technician is responsible for:

* Maintaining and running the equipment and the loans process
* Resolving issues with equipment
* Carrying out checks on equipment before and after use
* Adjusting access rights and security privileges
* Monitoring pupils’ use of equipment
* Reporting any signs of misuse and/or abuse of equipment to the Headteacher/Head of School
* Classifying and cataloguing resources, including undertaking a regular stock-take
* Safely store all equipment not out on loan
* Sending and drafting letters concerning overdue equipment to parents, teachers and senior management
* Sourcing, purchasing and cataloguing new equipment
* Demonstrating how to use equipment before use
* Liaising with ICT teachers to maximise pupils’ use of the equipment
* Assisting the Headteacher/Head of School with their investigations if any equipment is lost or stolen
* Implementing this policy with the Headteacher/Head of School
* Implementing relevant parts of individual school’s ICT Curriculum Policy
* Installing adequate malware protection on all loaned devices
* Ensuring that the online protection offered on loaned devices, e.g. age-restricted content blockers, adheres to expectations outlined in the Online Safety Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

# The loaning procedure

Correspondence detailing the loans procedure and potential fines for late returns and damages will be sent to all parents.

Loans will be requested in writing, and pupils should give notice of at least five working days. Pupils must obtain their parents’ signatures on their equipment request.

By loaning equipment, pupils and parents will agree to the terms of use as set out in this policy.

Once the request has been reviewed and accepted, pupils will be required to undergo training to use the equipment, including learning how to store and handle equipment, and how to undertake any maintenance, e.g. changing batteries – this training may be conducted virtually where necessary.

Only the pupil who has requested the equipment will be permitted to collect it.

If the equipment is no longer needed, pupils will notify the designated equipment lead as early as possible to allow the equipment to be made available to someone else.

If the pupil is unable to collect the equipment from the school site, e.g. due to sickness, their parents should contact the school office to make alternative arrangements.

The maximum loan period will be determined by the Headteacher/Head of School.

Where a pupil is loaned electronic equipment for an extended period of time for remote learning purposes, their parents will be required to complete a Device Loan Agreement for Parents prior to the pupil taking the equipment off-site.

The Headteacher/Head of School will give special consideration to pupils requests for equipment loans over weekends and school holidays.

When equipment is returned, the Headteacher/Head of School will ask the Trust Estate Manager or ICT Technician as appropriate to check all components and make sure it is in full working order.

Pupils or their parents may request an extension to their existing loan period – this should be done in writing to the Headteacher/Head of School.

The Headteacher/Head of School will review any extension requests and extend the loan period by an appropriate number of days unless there is a reasonable justification not to do so, e.g. the equipment has been booked for loan to someone else.

The Headteacher/Head of School is not required to extend the loan period by the length requested if this is not feasible; however, they will attempt to allow appropriate time for the requester to fulfil the tasks for which they require the loaned equipment.

# Maintenance, service and storage

Servicing and storage of the equipment is the responsibility of the designated equipment lead, who will carry out visual checks before and after each use.

Thorough checks of the equipment will be carried out regularly

Regular checks for updates will be carried out on all laptops and tablets, including updates for malware protection and age-restriction settings.

Equipment will be stored in a locked area that only the Headteacher/Head of School, Trust Estate Manager or ICT Technician have access to.

Regular stock-takes will be undertaken to ensure the whereabouts of each piece of equipment is known.

A list of all equipment will be kept in the storage area; a computerised version of this will also be made available.

All superficial damage will be noted in order to keep track of problems and to avoid wrongly charging someone for damage not caused by them.

# Online safety

Online safety will be managed in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Online Safety Policy.

All loaned devices will be adequately equipped to keep pupils safe online, e.g. by having safe search filters in place. The ICT Technician will check that filtering and monitoring systems work on devices before they are loaned to staff and pupils.

Pupils and their parents will not be permitted to remove any online safety features on the loaned device. The removal of these safety features will result in the termination of the loan, in line with the Acceptable Use Agreement.

The ICT Technician will ensure that the removal of online safety features on loaned devices is prohibited except by authorised users.

All users will be made aware that their activity on TCAT devices will be monitored and subject to review to ensure appropriate use.

If online safety concerns arise, pupils will cease to use the loaned device and report it to the Headteacher/Head of School as soon as possible. The Headteacher/Head of School will report any online safety concerns relating to the use of loaned devices to their DSL.

Concerns about the functionality of online safety features should be reported to the ICT Technician and resolved as soon as possible. The device will not be returned to the pupil or made available for loan until the issue has been fully resolved and tested.

Routine checks to TCAT’s filtering and monitoring systems will ensure that the system setup has not been changed or deactivated on any loaned devices. A log of all checks will be recorded.

TCAT’s filtering and monitoring provision for all devices will be reviewed at least annually to ensure it meets the needs of pupils and staff, reflects the TCAT’s use of technology and meets changing needs and potential risks.

# Device security

All TCAT devices will be protected with a correctly configured boundary, or software firewall. Firewall firmware will be kept up to date.

Authentication will be required to access sensitive TCAT, school or network data. Accounts will only be provided with the access required for the purposes for which the device is loaned.

Anti-malware software will be in place to protect all devices, and it will be kept up to date alongside associated files and databases. The ICT Technician will ensure TCAT’s anti-malware software:

* Is set up to scan files upon access, when downloaded, opened, or accessed from a network folder
* Scans web pages as they are accessed
* Prevents access to potentially malicious websites, unless risk-assessed, authorised and documented against a specific business requirement

Staff and pupils will report any concerns about the security of the device, including possible cyber-attacks, to the ICT Technician as soon as possible.

# Lost, damaged and stolen goods

Pupils will be required to notify their Headteacher/Head of School of any damage when returning the item – where the pupil is unable to do so, their parent is responsible for notifying the Headteacher/Head of School.

Pupils will be held liable for any missing or damaged goods. Where the pupil’s parent has signed the Acceptable Use Agreement on their child’s behalf, the parent may also be liable for missing or damaged goods.

The Headteacher/Head of School will carry out a visual check on all returned goods and arrange for a full inspection by the Trust Estate Manager or ICT Technician as appropriate.

If any damage is found, it will be assessed by the Trust Estate Manager or ICT Technician as appropriate. The following conditions will apply:

* If the damage is superficial, e.g. a scratch on the case or covering, there will be no charge
* If the damage is more serious, the Chief Financial Officer will decide whether to incur a charge depending on the severity of the damage

If the Chief Financial Officer decides that TCAT requires a partial or full contribution towards repairs, a letter will be sent to the pupil’s parents.

The costs of the repairs will be reflective of the damage caused. Costs will be reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and Headteacher/Head of School on a case-by-case basis.

Fines for damage to equipment may be charged at a full replacement or repair cost.

In the event loan equipment is stolen, the pupil or their parent must immediately report the matter to the local police to obtain a crime reference number. The pupil or their parent should inform their Headteacher/Head of School at the earliest opportunity, no later than the scheduled return date of the equipment and give them the police crime reference number.

Pupils loaning equipment will be briefed on the security measures they must take.

# Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the published schedule at the front of this document and at any point material changes require it by the Executive Headteacher/CEO in collaboration with the Board appointed Trustee, the Trust Board and Executive and Senior Leadership.

Any changes made to the policy will be amended by the Executive Headteacher/CEO and will be communicated to Executive Leaders, the TCAT Central Team and to Headteachers/Heads of School, who, in turn, will alert school-based staff.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is 31st August 2028.

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| Signed by: | | | |
|  | Executive Headteacher/CEO | Date: |  |
|  | Board appointed Trustee | Date: |  |