

Three Counties Academy Trust



Equality Information and Objectives Policy

#GN7

Last updated: 01 September 2023

Review Date: 31 August 2024

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Statement of intent

Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT) 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 TCAT 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 TCAT and school 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'. TCAT 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 TCAT or a TCAT 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

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

TCAT 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.

TCAT 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. TCAT will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the community.

TCAT 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. TCAT will ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations. The TCAT's Admissions Policy will not discriminate against any protected characteristic in any way.

TCAT will:

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, given necessary training and support, and report progress to the Governing 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 throughout TCAT, 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 Governing Board will:

- Ensure that TCAT 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 TCAT compliance with the PSED
- Ensure that the TCAT's policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans
- Ensure that the TCAT'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 Governing 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/CEO 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 Governing Board

Staff will:

- Be mindful of any incidents of harassment or bullying within TCAT
- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying and report any major breaches of the policy to the Executive Headteacher/CEO
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the TCAT'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 TCAT 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 TCAT's equality and diversity policies, procedures, and codes
- TCAT 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

TCAT is committed to promoting the welfare and equality of all its staff, pupils, and other members of the TCAT 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

TCAT 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 TCAT website every year. TCAT 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 TCAT's legal obligations.

TCAT 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

TCAT 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

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

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

TCAT 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

TCAT will publish findings on our website.

TCAT will update its equality objectives at least every four years and publish on the individual school websites. TCAT 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, TCAT has identified the following priorities:

- TCAT 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 TCAT life
- Staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and TCAT will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic
- TCAT 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 (Behaviour) Policy, which will be consistently enforced
- TCAT will increase access for disabled children and young people to the TCAT 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 TCAT
- TCAT will ensure there is adequate access to the physical environment of TCAT
- TCAT will improve the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people
- TCAT will seek the views of advisory staff, outside agencies, and local schools
- Throughout the year, TCAT will plan ongoing events to raise awareness of equality and diversity

TCAT 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

TCAT 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 Governing Board and/or the LA.

9. Complaint's procedures

TCAT 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 TCAT provides.

TCAT 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 TCAT's process and the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to appeal, as outlined in the Complaints Policy and Procedures.

TCAT 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. TCAT 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

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 and Chief Finance Officer in conjunction with the Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion, Headteacher/Heads of School, and the Governing Board. Any changes made to the policy will be amended by the Executive Headteacher/CEO and will be communicated to all members of staff.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is 31st August 2024.

Signed by:

_____	Executive Headteacher/CEO	Date: _____
_____	Chair of Governing Board	Date: _____

Schedule of revisions

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