

Three Counties Academy Trust



Accessibility Policy

#SD1

Last amended 1st September 2026 (v1.0)

Policy lifespan: 3 years. Subject to annual compliance check. Next full review 31st August 2029.

Version history

Date	Version	Details	Actioned by	PDF to Websites	Word to Governor Hub
01.09.26	1.0	Formatted to house style and checked against model for updates.	MF	✓	✓

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Trust Glossary

Policy Abbreviations and Acronyms

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DfE	Department for Education
IEP	Individual Education Plan
LA	Local Authority
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
TA	Teaching Assistant

NB. Where the term “parent” or “parents” is used this includes those who act as carers or have parental responsibility.

NB. Staff roles noted within this policy may also include those staff performing that role in an ‘Acting’ capacity.

Statement of intent

Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT) 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.

TCAT 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. TCAT continually looks for ways to improve accessibility within our schools through data collection, parent questionnaires and discussions.

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

Member, Trustee, Local Governor and Staff Summary

Purpose and Principles

- Ensures pupils with disabilities can access education, opportunities, and school life on an equal basis
- Promotes inclusion, equality of opportunity and removal of barriers to participation
- Supports early identification of need and collaborative working with families and external agencies

Governance and Accountability

- Trustees and Local Governors oversee compliance with accessibility duties and monitor implementation
- School leaders are responsible for ensuring accessibility arrangements operate effectively
- Accessibility Plans are reviewed, monitored, and published as required

Key Responsibilities of Staff

- Staff must act in accordance with the policy and accessibility arrangements
- Reasonable adjustments should be considered wherever practical
- Staff should work with SENCOs, leaders and families to support access and inclusion

Accessibility Arrangements

- Schools maintain Accessibility Plans covering curriculum access, physical access, and accessible information
- Annual accessibility audits help identify improvements and priorities
- Accessibility considerations are embedded within wider school improvement planning

Admissions, Inclusion and Equality

- Pupils with disabilities must not be disadvantaged through admissions arrangements
- Schools seek to remove barriers and provide equal opportunities wherever possible
- Extracurricular activities and wider school experiences should be accessible to all pupils

Curriculum and Environment

- Teaching and resources should be adapted where necessary to support access
- Specialist resources and targeted support may be used where appropriate
- School buildings and facilities are designed or adapted to improve access for pupils, staff, and visitors with disabilities

Assurance and Monitoring

- Local Governing Bodies complete annual accessibility audits and report findings
- Policy compliance and accessibility improvements are monitored regularly
- Accessibility documentation may be reviewed as part of inspection activity

Parent and Visitor Summary

Our Commitment

- We want every pupil to be able to participate fully in school life
- We work to remove barriers that may affect access to learning, activities, and information
- We value inclusion, equality, and respect for individual needs

What Parents Can Expect

- Reasonable adjustments will be considered where needed
- Schools will work with families to understand a child's needs and identify appropriate support
- Accessibility information and support arrangements can be discussed with the school at any time

Access to Learning and Activities

- Teaching, resources, and activities may be adapted to support participation
- Educational visits, clubs, and wider opportunities should be accessible wherever possible
- The school reviews accessibility regularly to identify further improvements

Visitors to Our Schools

- We aim to make school sites accessible to visitors with disabilities
- Visitors who require adjustments are encouraged to contact the school in advance where possible
- Accessibility needs will be considered when planning events and meetings

Continuous Improvement

- Schools maintain and review Accessibility Plans
- Accessibility audits help identify priorities for future improvements
- Feedback from families and visitors helps us improve accessibility arrangements

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 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'](#)
- [DfE 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'](#)

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 TCAT and school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- School Development Plan
- Data Protection Policy (FI20)
- Admissions Policy Trust Level (GN1)
- Equality Information and Objectives Policy (GN7)
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy (GN19)
- Health and Safety Policy (HS1)

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy (SD3)
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy (SG4)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (SG19)
- Administering Medication Policy (SG20)

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.

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, TCAT 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 and where delegated, Local Governing Bodies will be responsible for:

- Monitoring the Accessibility Policy
- Approving and monitoring the Accessibility Plan before it is implemented for each school as appropriate

Specifically, Local Governing Bodies will be responsible for:

- Conducting an accessibility audit annually and reporting the findings to the Trust Board

The CEO will be responsible for:

- Working closely with the Trust Board, school leaders, the LA, and external agencies to effectively create and implement TCAT’s Accessibility Policy

Executive Headteachers, Headteachers and where delegated, Heads of School will be responsible for:

- Working closely with the Central Team, their Local Governing Bodies, the LA, Their SENCO and external agencies to effectively create and implement their school's Accessibility Plan in accordance with this policy
- Publishing and maintaining their Accessibility Plan on their school's website

SENCOs will be responsible for:

- 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 their Executive Headteacher, Headteacher or Head of School, their Local Governing Body, LA, and external agencies in contributing to the creation and implementation of their school's Accessibility Plan

Staff members will be responsible for:

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

All staff members, Trustees and Local 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

Each school's Accessibility Plan will demonstrate how access will be improved for pupils with disabilities, staff, parents, and visitors to the school within a given timeframe. It will be presented as a freestanding document with responsibility for writing and monitoring the plan, including updating it where required resting with the Headteacher or Head of School where the Executive Headteacher delegates the responsibility. The Accessibility Plan will be structured to complement and support TCAT's Equality Information and Objectives Policy, as well as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

The plan in each TCAT school has the following key aims:

- To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- To improve and maintain the school's 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 on August 31st, 2029. 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. TCAT will provide adequate resources for implementing plans, ensuring pupils are sufficiently supported.

The school's 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 TCAT planning documents and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

An accessibility audit will be undertaken by the Local Governing Body every year and reported to the Trust Board.

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

5. Equal opportunities

TCAT 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. Each school's 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

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

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

TCAT 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. TCAT aims to provide a differentiated curriculum across schools to enable all pupils to feel secure and make progress.

School 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 TCAT schools. Detailed pupil information on pupils with SEND is 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

TCAT is committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff members, parents and visitors have equal access to areas and facilities within TCAT premises. There are no parts of any TCAT 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 in our primary settings.

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.

Monitoring and review

Lifespan of Policy: 3 Years

At any point this policy is updated or fully reviewed, it will be updated on the main TCAT website and will automatically update on all TCAT school websites simultaneously.

Where an annual check or other check results in minor changes, the Version History will be reviewed and updated with a change in the number following the decimal point, for example, v1.1 ⇒ v1.2. Where the policy is reviewed in full, then the number before the decimal point will change and reset, for example v1.4 ⇒ v2.0.

Any changes made by the CEO in collaboration with the Board Appointed Trustee will be passed to the Trust Board for ratification and subsequently be notified to Clerks to Local Governing Bodies and Headteachers/Heads of School.

The next scheduled full review date for this policy is 31st August 2029.

Date approved by the Board Appointed Trustee: 1st September 2026.

To be ratified and recorded in the minutes at the first Trust Board Meeting after 1st September 2026.

Trust Glossary

AA	Admissions Authority	H&S	Health and Safety
AAI	Adrenaline Auto-Injector (Epi Pen)	HoS	Head of School
ACM	Asbestos Containing Materials	HSE	Health and Safety Executive
AHT	Assistant Headteacher	ICO	Information Commissioners Office
AIR	Attendance Intervention Reviews	IDSR	Inspection Data Summary Report
APDR	Assess Plan Do Review Cycle	IHP	Individual Healthcare Plan
APIs	Application Programming Interfaces	IRMS	Information and Records Management Society
ASC	Autistic Spectrum Condition	IWF	Internet Watch Foundation
ASP	Analyse School Performance	KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
ATH	Academy Trust Handbook	KS1/2/3/4	Key Stage 1/2/3/4
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds	LAC	Looked After Child
BAT	Board Appointed Trustee	LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
BCP	Business Continuity Plan	LGB	Local Governing Body
BFR	Budget Forecast Return	LLC	Low-Level Concerns
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	LSA	Learning Support Assistants
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
CIF	Condition Improvement Fund	MAT	Multi-Academy Trust

CIN	Child in Need	MFA	Multi-Factor Authentication
CLA	Children Looked After	MFL	Modern Foreign Language
CMIE	Child Missing in Education	NCSC	National Cyber Security Centre
COO	Chief Operating Officer	NoV	Note of Visit
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health	NPQ	National Professional Qualifications
CP	Child Protection	PA	Persistent Absence
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	PAN	Published Admission Number
CPOMS	Child Protection Online Management System	PECR	Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations
CSCS	Children's Social Care Services	PEP	Personal Education Plan
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	PEEP	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan
CTIRU	Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit	PEx	Permanent Exclusion
CWD	Children with Disabilities	PP	Pupil Premium
CYPMHS	Children and Young People's Mental Health Services	PPG	Pupil Premium Grant
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service	PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
DfE	Department for Education	PTFA	Parent, Teacher and Friends Association
DHT	Deputy Headteacher	QA	Quality Assurance

DSE	Display Screen Equipment	RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	RHE	Relationships and Health Education
DPO	Data Protection Officer	RPA	Risk Protection Arrangement
EAL	English as an Additional Language	RSHE	Relationships, Sex and Health Education
ECT	Early Career Teacher	SA	Severely Absent
EDIB	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging	SALT	Speech and Language Therapist
EHA	Early Help Assessment	SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
EHENA	Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment	SBM	School Business Manager
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan	SCC	Standard Contractual Clause
EHE	Elective Home Education	SCITT	School-Centred Initial Teacher Training
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant	SCR	Single Central Record
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency	SDP	School Development Plan
EVC	Educational Visit Coordinator	SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
EWOSSE	Education Welfare and Safeguarding Support Officer	SEF	Self-Evaluation Form
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage	SEMH	Social, Emotional, and Mental Health
FBV	Fundamental British Values	SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
FFT	Fischer Family Trust	SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	SIP	School Improvement Partner
FGMPO	FGM Protection Order	SLA	Service Level Agreement
FOI	Freedom of Information	SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
FSM	Free School Meals	SLT	Senior Leadership Team
FTS	Find a Tender Service	SPOC	Single Point of Contact
GAG	General Annual Grant	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation	TA	Teaching Assistant
GIAS	Get Information about Schools	TAC	Team Around the Child
HASH	Herefordshire Association of Secondary Heads	TCAT	Three Counties Academy Trust
HBA	Honour Based Abuse	TUPE	Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)
HR	Human Resources	VSH	Virtual School Headteacher