

Three Counties Academy Trust



Accessibility Policy

#SD1

Last updated: 01 September 2023

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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 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 TCAT and 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, 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 Governing Board will be responsible for:

- Monitoring the Accessibility Plan

- Approving the Accessibility Plan before it is implemented

The Executive Headteacher/CEO will be responsible for:

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

The Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion will be responsible for:

- Creating an Accessibility Plan with the intention of improving each school's accessibility, in conjunction with the Governing 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/CEO, Governing Board, LA, and external agencies to effectively create and implement the TCAT's Accessibility Plan

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Working closely with the Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion and Governing 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

TCAT's Accessibility Plan demonstrates how access will be improved for pupils with disabilities, staff, parents, and visitors to the TCAT estate within a given timeframe. It will be presented as a freestanding document. 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 has the following key aims:

- To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- To improve and maintain the TCAT school estates 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 31st, 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. TCAT 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 TCAT planning documents and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

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

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

TCAT will act in accordance with its Admissions Policy. 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 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 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.

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 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, Chief Finance Officer and Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion in conjunction with School Leaders 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 2025.

Signed by:

_____ Executive Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of Trustees Date: _____

