

Key Holder Policy

#ST5

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**Statement of intent**

Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT) understands that it is important to maintain a high level of security at our schools and, as such, access to TCAT buildings and grounds is limited to a certain number of authorised staff who are identified key holders. This policy is designed to ensure that all staff at our schools are aware of the authorised key holders, and to provide clear guidelines of practice for the key holders, including on the operation of alarm systems.

# Roles and responsibilities

The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is responsible and has oversight for:

* Overseeing the process for deposits
* Providing key holders with a receipt for their key deposit
* Ensuring that only appropriate and suitable individuals are designated as key holders, and that any risks are managed
* Ensuring that the procedures in this policy are adhered to at all times

The Trust Estate Manager is responsible for:

* Maintaining a key deposit record and logbook
* Storing all keys, including spare keys, securely
* Providing new, duplicate or replacement keys as and when necessary

Key holders are responsible for:

* Adhering to the procedures outlined in this policy
* Maintaining responsibility for the keys issued to them
* Reporting loss or theft of keys to the Chief Finance Officer
* Returning keys to the Chief Finance Officer when they are no longer needed

# Designating key holders

The CFO in collaboration with the Executive Headteacher/CEO will designate key holders, with consideration given to their role, their need to access the site, proximity to the site and their suitability and experience. At least three key holders will be designated.

The CFO will liaise with the Trust Estate Manager to issue all keys to authorised individuals and will keep a record of this using the Key Holder Logbook. The key holder will sign the Key Holder Logbook to agree that they are responsible for the key in their possession. The logbook will be shared with TCAT’s security alarm company.

The key holder will be made aware of what is expected of them, including attending an individual TCAT school or where appropriate anywhere on the TCAT site outside of working hours, in line with their specific responsibilities as stipulated in their contract. The Trust Estate Manager will provide training to key holders on the correct procedures for opening and closing the premises, setting, and resetting the security system, and how to respond to any incidents.

Temporary key holders may be identified at the discretion of the CFO and will adhere to the guidelines outlined in this policy.

# Security

All keys are stored in a locked cabinet in the individual TCAT school key safes in designated locations; only the CFO, Trust Estate Manager or authorised staff member has access to this cabinet. All keys have a fob attached containing their identification number and key holders maintain full responsibility for any key in their possession.

The CFO will keep a copy of each key in the locked cabinet in the Trust Estate Managers Office– this is the only copy that is permitted.

The CFO will review the needs of each authorised person annually to ensure that the key holder still needs access to the key. If access is no longer needed, the CFO will recall the key.

Key holders will ensure that they organise appropriate cover at least 24 hours in advance by contacting the CFO if they cannot attend the school or site for any reason to fulfil their responsibilities.

Key holders will not copy a key or lend the key to any other individual. Key holders will not change any locks in TCAT buildings unless expressly instructed to do so.

Any key holder who is found to have lent a key to another individual, copied a key, or changed any locks within the TCAT estate, may be subject to a charge to replace keys or to cover the cost of changing locks and may face disciplinary action in line with the Staff Code of Conduct.

Key holders will report any lost keys to the CFO immediately or in their absence the Executive Headteacher/CEO, who will then assess the level of security risk and respond accordingly, e.g., by changing locks. Key holders may be subject to a charge to cover the full cost of the replacement of a key following loss or theft; the CFO will determine what is appropriate given the circumstances.

All key holders will have a mobile phone in their possession when attending TCAT premises to allow them to contact the security alarm company, other key holders, and emergency services as appropriate.

# Temporary key holders

At the discretion of the CFO, it may be decided that a temporary key holder is necessary to maintain the security of the TCAT estate, such as a member of staff other than those identified in this policy.

The CFO will assess the risk of the individual to ensure they are responsible to undertake a key holder role before providing them with authorised use of the key.

The Trust Estate Manager will record the name of the temporary key holder, as well as the start and end date of their authorisation, in the Key Holder Logbook.

The temporary key holder will sign the entry in the Key Holder Logbook, recognising responsibility for the key in their possession.

The temporary key holder is required to return the key to the CFO by the specified termination date of their authorised use and will sign the Key Holder Logbook to indicate this has been returned.

# Alarms

The CFO will provide key holders who need out-of-hours access to any TCAT school with the codes to the alarms installed within the specific school.

The CFO will keep a record of all named employees who have access to the alarms and are aware of the codes. Key holders will be instructed not to pass on this information to any other individual – breaches of this will be handled in line with the Staff Code of Conduct.

Key holders will adhere to the following process when setting the alarm:

* Ascertain that there is nothing in close proximity which is likely to activate the system or block the effectiveness of the system
* Check that they have all necessary equipment to re-enter the premises and re-set the alarm if required, e.g., keys, security ID pass, etc
* Ensure that they are able to set the alarm correctly and use the appropriate codes; if they are unable to do so, they will contact the alarm company, or another key holder, for advice and instructions
* Remain on the premises if there is a problem setting the alarms until the problem has been rectified

The Trust Estate Manager, Mr J Weighill, will be the primary key holder in the case of an emergency and will attend any TCAT school out-of-hours when the alarm system is activated as soon as possible unless he is unable to do so. In the event of a false alarm, they will follow the individual school’s abort procedures and re-set all relevant alarms. In the event of a serious alarm, such as a trespasser, they will act in accordance with TCAT’s Lone Worker Policy and are required to contact the police immediately and to not place themselves in danger.

If the primary key holder is unavailable, any of the secondary key holders will be contacted to attend the premises, with individual school site staff being the immediate next contact.

# Deposit charges

Existing members of staff that are identified as authorised personnel are not required to provide a deposit but are bound by the conditions outlined in this policy should a key be lost.

Temporary key holders who are not employed by TCAT are required to provide a deposit of £20 per key, which is refundable upon return of the key.

TCAT has the right to retain these deposits as it sees necessary for any charges.

All deposits are stored in a locked cabinet in the TCAT Finance Office; only the CFO or Academy Business Manager has access to this cabinet.

# 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 Trust Estate Manager and the in conjunction with the Trust 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.

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| Signed by: |
|  | Executive Headteacher/CEO | Date: |  |
|  | Chair of the Trust Board | Date: |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Key number** | **Start date** | **End date** | **Deposit paid** | **Signed out****(CFO signature)** | **Signed in****(CFO signature)** | **Signed out****(key holder signature)** | **Signed in****(key holder signature)** |
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**Key Holder Logbook**