Accessibility Policy

TPAT Policy Management

Document history					
Review date	**Version**	**Reviewer / owner**	**Executive approval**	**Approving body**	**Meeting date of policy approval**
04/2023	1	Director of Inclusion	04/2023	EPSC	15/05/2023
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Material changes since last publication	
Section	**Changes**
1	Public Sector Equality Duty section added

This policy is reviewed every three years. The next review is due by October 2029.

Introduction

The Trust intends and expects that all decisions, policies and procedures will be underpinned at all times by its vision and values.

Our aim:

TPAT - Inspiring futures, empowering people.

We aim to benefit our communities by nurturing well-educated, aspirational and creative young people. We exist to inspire futures and empower all our people. We achieve this by enriching and fulfilling our employees with the investment to become masters of their craft, all working together to realise exceptional outcomes for young people.

To achieve this our schools will:

- Create an aspirational, driven, and highly engaging educational environment where every pupil can succeed.
- Commit to knowing each pupil individually and empowering them to excel.
- Deliver the highest quality learning opportunities facilitated by excellent teachers.
- Inspire our pupils to become confident, motivated and respectful individuals ready to make a positive contribution to society.

The Trust will support our schools by:

- Providing the resources and stability schools need to work efficiently and effectively, overcoming challenges and prioritising education every day.
- Providing a platform for collaboration, sharing excellence and experience, and fostering unity and shared purpose.
- Nurturing our Trust's 'culture of improvement' where staff thrive in a safe, supportive network, embracing feedback and professional dialogue to drive sustainable improvement.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 places a legal obligation on schools which makes it unlawful to discriminate against students, staff and other stakeholders with a disability. The Act brings together several different equality laws including the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). It places a duty on schools to consider what reasonable adjustments need to be made to improve access to the schools' services for any stakeholder with a disability, including students, staff, parents, and carers and any other visitors to school, without waiting until the adjustment is actually needed.

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The Trust and its schools will have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Definition of Disability

A person is disabled under the Act if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to undertake normal daily activities.

Substantial is more than minor or trivial, eg it takes much longer than it usually would, or is undertaken in a significantly different way, to complete a daily task such as getting dressed. Long-term means 12 months or more.

People with progressive conditions can be classed as disabled. A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time. However, someone automatically meets the disability definition under the Act from the day that they are diagnosed with HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis.

Some conditions are expressly excluded from the definition of disabled by the Act.

These are:

- addiction to, or dependency on, alcohol, nicotine, or any other substance (other than in consequence of the substance being medically prescribed)
- the condition known as seasonal allergic rhinitis (eg hay fever), except where it aggravates the effect of another condition
- tendency to set fires
- tendency to steal
- tendency to physical or sexual abuse of other persons
- exhibitionism
- voyeurism

The exclusions also apply where these tendencies arise as a consequence of, or a manifestation of, an impairment that constitutes a disability for the purposes of the Act.

The Act states that, except for the provisions in Part 12 (Transport) and section 190 (improvements to let dwelling houses), the provisions of the Act also apply in relation to a person who previously has had a disability as defined above. This means that someone who is no longer disabled, but who met the requirements of the definition in the past, will still be covered by the Act. Also protected would be someone who continues to experience debilitating effects as a result of treatment for a past disability.

This policy relates to any young person who attends one of the Trust's schools, and members of staff employed by the Trust.

Where someone meets the definition of a disabled person in the Act, the Trust will make reasonable adjustments to any elements of a job, or site, which place that person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person.

All schools in the Trust must show they are:

- Identifying pupils and staff with disabilities to enable reasonable assistance to them and without discriminating against them
- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable those with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improving the availability of accessible information to those with disabilities

Reasonable adjustments in relation to students and parents / carers might include:

- Removing movable barriers like furniture, teaching and holding meetings in a different, wheelchair accessible room
- Allowing a guide or hearing dog into the school
- Purchasing specialist equipment, such as an ergonomic chair
- Discounting disability-related sickness leave for the purposes of absence management
- Providing additional supervisory guidance / support
- Allowing different start and end times to the working day for staff

From September 2012 schools have been required to provide auxiliary aids (and services) for disabled pupils to overcome any disadvantage experienced in schools.

Reasonable adjustments in relation to the school site might include:

- Providing step free access to school buildings where possible
- When designing new classrooms or refurbishing old buildings, ensuring that doors are wide enough for wheelchair access
- Including a disabled parking space in the car park

If it is clear that the only adjustments that can be made to avoid a disadvantage are unreasonable then they do not need to be made. In such situations the school must document, in detail, how and why it has come to this conclusion.

Accessibility Plans

Every school in the Trust must have an accessibility plan and this must be published on the school's website.

The accessibility plan must include:

- How the curriculum is differentiated and, at Key Stage 4, what alternative accreditation is offered
- How information for pupils, parents and the community is available in different formats such as Braille, larger font or reduced / simplified language
- Actions to improve the signage in the buildings and grounds where needed
- Arrangements that could be put in place if a disabled parent needed support to attend a school event
- Plans to make the school's site more accessible for disabled learners, their parents / carers and staff

Accessibility plans should cover a period of 3 years and then be reviewed again at the end of that period with an updated plan for the next 3 years.

Linked Policies

Equality Policy
Special Educational Needs and Disability Statement
Safeguarding and Child Protection Statement
Health and Safety Policy
Inclusion Strategy
SEND Policy
Accessibility Plan