

Responding to Prejudice-Related Incidents Policy

Type: Policy

Status: Statutory

Issue Status:-

Date	Version	Comment	Owner
September 2022	1	Original document	Martin Paine
September 2023	2	Review and update	Martin Paine
September 2024	3	Review and update	Martin Paine

Electronic copies of this document are available to download from:
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Approved: Academy Committee - September 2023/4

Available publicly on Website: Yes

Review Date: September 2025

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Policy for Responding to Prejudice-Related Incidents

1. Aims

At Thomas Deacon Academy (TDA), we are aware of our responsibilities under the [Equality Act 2010](#) to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. As such, we aim to provide opportunities for students to learn to respect one another in line with our own character values of compassion and courtesy and Fundamental British Values of mutual respect and tolerance.

We celebrate the wide range of ethnic groups, cultures, languages and religious beliefs that are to be found in our academy community. We seek to be welcoming to all different types of people and families and be equally inclusive of people who have a disability and those who do not.

We recognise that prejudice-related incidents do happen and we take them extremely seriously when they do, recognising that they can cause harm to all those involved, as well as to our wider academy community. By effectively tackling prejudice-related incidents, we seek to create a positive school environment for everyone and to safeguard the wellbeing of all pupils and staff. In doing so, we aim to fully meet our obligations under the 2010 Equality Act, as well as best prepare our children for life in modern Britain and to thrive in a diverse, globalised world.

The aims of this policy are to:

- establish an agreed definition of prejudice-related incidents;
- share the principles behind our programme of preventative education;
- detail how we respond to, report and monitor prejudice-related incidents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Equality & Diversity Policy, Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

2. Defining Prejudice Related Incidents

At TDA, we define a prejudice-related incident as, *“any incident which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be prejudiced towards an individual, due to one or more of the protected characteristics.”*

We recognise the following protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

We will investigate, record and report all incidents, including those that are reported to be unintentional. We recognise that just because someone did not intend to offend, it does not mean that the incident did not cause harm.

Our response will always aim to educate so that everyone understands the potential harm which can result from such behaviour. Intention is important when considering the actions that need to be taken with the perpetrator, but a lack of intent does not prevent an incident from being considered prejudice-related.

We recognise that prejudice-related incidents may take a range of forms, which include but are not limited to: use of prejudicial language; ridicule and jokes; verbal abuse; physical

assault; graffiti or damage to property; discriminatory behaviour (e.g. refusing to work with a person); incitement to behave in a prejudicial manner; bullying, (including cyber bullying).

3. Prejudice-Related Incidents and Bullying

We recognise that:

- **any** child/young person may be affected by bullying;
- sometimes bullying is related to prejudice.

Whilst all incidents of prejudice-related bullying in schools constitute a prejudice-related incident, not all prejudice-related incidents would constitute prejudice-related bullying.

To determine if a prejudice-related incident is bullying, refer to our definition of bullying: *The **repetitive**, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.*"

We know that experiencing bullying can have a significant, negative and lasting impact on a child's emotional and mental wellbeing. We also recognise the negative impact that engaging in bullying behaviours or witnessing the bullying of another can have.

See our Anti-bullying Policy for information about how we respond to reports of bullying.

4. The Role of Preventative Education

We recognise that effective preventative education can reduce the chance of prejudice-related behaviour occurring. We know that children learn about building respectful relationships in a wide variety of ways, not only through planned lessons, but through their everyday experiences at school and at home.

Our academy values, enrichment opportunities, whole-academy events and the interventions and support offered, all contribute to the development of these skills. All members of staff understand their role in supporting our strong inclusive culture.

Our preventive education fulfils the following relevant sections of the DfE statutory requirements for [Relationships Education and Health Education \(2020\)](#).

By the end of primary school pupils should know:

- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care, (*family and people who care for me*).
- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs (*respectful relationships*).
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive (*respectful relationships*).

By the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice), (*respectful relationships, including friendships*).

- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal, (*respectful relationships, including friendships*).

These aspects of the curriculum will be taught via:

- Personal Development through designated lessons, participation in focused events and themed weeks.
- Other curriculum areas, especially English, RE and History.
- Enrichment activities, our assembly programme, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, tutoring programme, Student Council.

For further information about our Personal Development Curriculum, including how we select appropriate teaching resources and external visitors see our Relationships Education Policy.

5. Responding to Prejudice-Related Incidents

All prejudiced language or behaviour should be challenged and how that challenge is made will depend on the circumstances and severity of the incident, and on any previous similar incidents involving either the victim or perpetrator.

The terms victim and perpetrator are used within this policy as they are terms that are easily understood, however care should be taken not to use these terms in front of involved parties.

When dealing with any possible prejudice-related incident, members of staff will:

- treat every issue seriously – remembering that someone's perception is their reality at the time and that incidents should never be dismissed or ignored;
- respond immediately – acknowledging that the incident has happened and offering support to the victim of the incident;
- reinforce the school's position on discrimination and prejudice;
- focus on the perpetrator's behaviour, rather than the person, making sure that they know that the behaviour is not acceptable;
- ensure that witnesses know what behaviour was not acceptable and why.

Prejudice-related incidents will always be properly investigated (by a tutor or member of the pastoral staff). The person investigating will:

- offer immediate support to the victim, acknowledging their feelings, reassuring them that the matter will be treated seriously and ascertaining whether they have been the victim of prejudice on previous occasions;
- ensure that both perpetrator and victim have a fair hearing and are given the opportunity separately to fully explain the incident;
- approach witnesses to gain their accounts of the incident (in writing);
- determine whether the incident was indeed prejudice-related or not, and ensure that the reasons why are explained to all parties involved;
- determine whether the incident is an aspect of a wider bullying issue and, if so, recording it on the academy's bullying log;
- give the perpetrator the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions and to try to repair the harm that they have caused;
- ensure that all parties, including the witnesses, understand what is being done to address the incident and the reasons behind this;
- inform relevant members of the senior leadership team and parents/carers where this is deemed appropriate;

- where appropriate, bring both parties together to give them a chance to be involved in resolving the situation;
- follow up with the perpetrator and victim after an agreed time period to decide whether any further action is needed’;
- where appropriate, ensure that there are subsequent curriculum opportunities for all pupils in that class/year group to develop their understanding of prejudice and discrimination, and to address any prejudiced attitudes.

6. Recording and Reporting Prejudice-Related Incidents

Any incident that is deemed to be prejudice-related and meets the definition of bullying (“the **repetitive**, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.” Behaviour Policy section 3.1) should be viewed as a safeguarding issue as the wellbeing of the child is at risk.

As such, these concerns are reported through the MyConcern system or on a Prejudice Incident Form (Appendix 1), if MyConcern is unavailable.. If appropriate, the concern can **also** be raised in person with the relevant Head of Year or Deputy Head of Year. In their absence, the matter should be reported to a senior member of staff linked to the year group.

One-off behaviours should be viewed as instances of unkind behaviour (*infrequent, or one-off, instances of physical, verbal or emotional abuse between students*) and logged as a negative event (unkind behaviour, homophobic or racist incident) on the academy’s data management system. This information is monitored by year teams daily to identify trends and decide if the issue is one of bullying.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer will then report all prejudice-related incidents to the LA using the online system ‘PRfE’ (Prejudice Reporting for Education: [Prejudice Reporting for Education \(PRfE\)](#)).

PRfE is an online reporting tool and every incident logged in PRfE captures details on the nature of the incident, type of prejudice, details of the victim and perpetrator and what actions were taken by the school. All incidents logged in the system are anonymised and do not include data that could identify individual pupils. This allows trends to be analysed by the school and the LA.

There may be occasions where a prejudice-related incident may need to be reported to the police as a potential hate incident or a potential hate crime. Police and the Crown Prosecution Service classify hate incidents as any incident which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be prejudiced towards an individual, due to disability, race, religion, transgender identity or sexual orientation.

If a crime may have been committed the category of a potential hate crime may apply. As the age of criminal responsibility in England is 10 years old, this category is unlikely to apply if the perpetrator is under 10. Criminal offences might include behaviour such as: malicious communications, assault, public order offences, criminal damage, harassment or sexual assault.

If the perpetrator of a prejudice-related incident is a member of staff, the school's disciplinary policy will be followed. However, following a full investigation, this will still be recorded as a prejudice-related incident.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Academy Committee members are responsible for:

- modelling respectful behaviour and the TDA character values;
- ensuring that the school complies with equality legislation;
- monitoring the frequency and pattern of any prejudice-related incidents and the actions taken by school staff to address them.

The Principal, with support from the rest of the Senior Leadership Team, is responsible for:

- modelling respectful behaviour and the TDA character values;
- ensuring that there are effective policies, procedures, recording and reporting systems in place for dealing with prejudice-related incidents;
- ensuring that all prejudice-related incidents are dealt with effectively and that staff and pupils receive appropriate support;
- providing training and ensuring that all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of their responsibilities;
- monitoring the frequency and nature of prejudice-related incidents and the effectiveness with which the school tackles and seeks to prevent them;
- reporting prejudice-related incidents to the Academy Committee and Local Authority.

Teachers and associate staff are responsible for:

- challenging prejudicial attitudes and behaviours;
- complying with school policies and procedures;
- promoting equality through the curriculum;
- modelling respectful behaviour and the TDA character values;
- responding to prejudice-related incidents according to academy policy
- reporting incidents when they occur.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly by the Principal and the Academy Committee, taking into account the frequency and pattern of prejudice-related incidents across the school. This will take place at least every 2 years.

Appendix 1 – PRfE Form for Reporting Prejudice-Related Incidents

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Type of incident (e.g. racist, homophobic): _____

Victim's name:	
	Please complete as appropriate
Year Group	
Outside person (including parents/carers)	
Teaching Staff	
Support Staff	
Unknown	

Perpetrator's name:	
	Please complete as appropriate
Year Group/Age	
Outside person (including parents/carers)	
Teaching Staff	
Support Staff	
Unknown	

Details of the incident:

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Action taken:

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Have the parents of the victim been informed?	Yes / No
Have the parents of the perpetrator been informed?	Yes / No
Victim's ethnic origin (for Racist incidents)	
Perpetrators ethnic origin (for Racist incidents)	

Record completed by:

Signature of designated member of staff:

Date:

Date recorded on PRfE system: