



Three  
Spires  
TRUST

*'Life in all its fullness'*

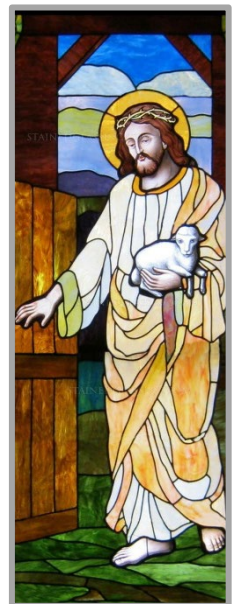
# Inclusion Strategy

2022-2024



This document outlines the Three Spires Trust Inclusion Strategy, which is an ambitious 3-year plan. It establishes our vision and road map to develop a trauma informed strategy at the heart of our core education offer, in-keeping with our distinctively Christian ethos. It is our vision that our children and young people are in a setting where they are supported by trauma informed professionals within and around their setting and where their learning needs are being met. We understand that a happy child is more likely to be a happy learner and, as such, we place an enormous focus on ensuring that a child or young person’s emotional needs are being met: that they feel included, valued and invested in as an individual. Our Inclusion Strategy represents an ambitious plan to bind together the various elements of statutory work in education settings, where strong partnership working is paramount, and where local authority involvement is often crucial, in order to support our aim to ensure that the children and young people in our family of schools and academies are able to both flourish and thrive. Three Spires Trust knows that the vast majority of children and young people’s needs can be met through quality first teaching; however, we also know that access to expert specialists and targeted support and interventions can enhance the core offer to some of the more vulnerable children and young people across our settings. Furthermore, we seek to build on the work being completed by some of our founder academies, where they are exploring relational and restorative practice, and the impact of this, alongside emotion coaching strategies in order to prevent exclusions and to promote inclusion.

In Romans 2:11, the Apostle Paul writes that “God shows no favouritism”; John 10:7-16 relays the Parable of the Good Shepherd – the shepherd who knows his sheep; he knows them all – for their good and for their bad, for their strengths and for their weaknesses. Sheep don’t have the ability to keep themselves safe, they would wander off the path and they would put themselves at risk and in danger. Through this parable, Jesus models to us about keeping sheep safe, about including them all, about not letting them drift and about not allowing them to stray without intervening and bringing them back. Jesus talks about the role of the Good Shepherd. Our Inclusion Strategy is borne out of the Parable of the Good Shepherd: we strive to provide a holistic education for our children and young people; we seek to keep them safe; we seek to develop strategies that will enable themselves to draw on the support and wisdom of those around them, but most of all, we seek for them to belong and to feel included. We know that by ensuring that all of these foundation blocks are in place, our children and young people will have the tools to thrive academically as well as spiritually and emotionally.



### **What does ‘inclusion’ mean for us?**

At its most basic, ‘inclusion’ means that children and young people are not being excluded from their setting. It reinforces that all of our children and young people feel that they belong to their school or academy and it strengthens the sense of identity held across the individual settings.

Whilst ‘inclusion’ may appear to have a very basic definition, ‘exclusion’ is more challenging to define. There are many and varied (il)legal approaches to exclusion, from the most basic forms – a suspension or permanent exclusion as a result of a significant breach of the behaviour policy and the impact of an individual’s behaviour on the welfare of themselves and / or others within the community – right through to much more subtle forms of exclusion, such as a child or young person not being able to adequately access the learning or engage with the learning as a result of an unmet need (be that academic, emotional, spiritual or otherwise). Children and young people are individuals. They have their own unique set of needs, challenges and experiences that they bring to their educational setting; their needs can vary on a daily basis. Children and young people may be disadvantaged by the challenges that they face because they are not able to respond in the desired way to a

situation, they may be disadvantaged by a zero tolerance approach to behaviour, they may not attend regularly (or, in more extreme cases, they may not attend at all). A sense of belonging can contribute positively to an individual's perception of the inclusivity of practice – this perception could belong to the child or young person themselves; however, it could also belong to their parent, their carer, or indeed to any professional involved in the wider support and / or care of an individual.

***Inclusive education focuses on the full and effective participation, accessibility, attendance and achievement of all students, especially those who, for different reasons, are excluded or at risk of being marginalised.”***

2020 Global Education monitoring  
Report on Inclusion, UNESCO, 2018

A holistic approach to education is fundamental for Three Spires Trust and all our schools and academies are supported to join us on the journey towards truly inclusive practice. Three Spires Trust not only recognises and appreciates the fact that every child and young person has a right to an education, but it also recognises and appreciates that every child and young person brings with them their own unique set of circumstances and has a right to be supported to flourish. Our schools and academies seek to understand the individual, they seek to know the children and young people that are in their care and they seek to demonstrate and awareness of what it is that they need in order to be able to succeed and be included in their education. Our schools and academies proactively seek to create conditions to ensure that children and young people not only have access to an excellent education, but also that they are safe, respected and that their voice is valued; only in this way will the combination of statutory work and non-statutory work to support our children and young people lead to a shared understanding and fully inclusive approach. Schools and academies cannot work in isolation if they are to support vulnerable children

and young people. Three Spires Trust's inclusion strategy recognises that we are 'stronger together' and that, in tandem with other organisations, we are able to support the whole child in order to ensure that they are included in the very best way possible and that their needs are met.

We seek to support our children and young people by ensuring that they are surrounded by trauma informed professionals when in the care of one of our organisations. The need of individual children and young people need to be met – their emotional needs, their learning needs and their spiritual needs, in order that they may feel included, that they may feel valued and that they may feel invested in and recognised as an individual person. Whilst Three Spires Trust recognises that the children and young people in our care are represented by the sheep in the Parable of the Good Shepherd, it is absolutely recognised that no one sheep is the same as another and that, as a result, no one approach will work for all. Our schools and academies cannot and will not take a 'one size fits all' approach to meeting the needs of the children and young people in their care.

Our Inclusion Strategy does not sit alone. It cannot sit alone. The Inclusion Strategy sits alongside the SEND policy, the safeguarding and child protection policies, the social, emotional and mental health policies, the pupil premium strategies, the attendance policies, the behaviour policies, and many more key policies and procedures within the schools and academies, and across the Trust as a whole. Three Spires Trust is fully aligned to 'Educating for life in all its fullness' and, at the heart of our vision, is a commitment to ensure that our practice resonates not only with the Bible and Christian understanding but also with the research and wisdom embedded in current educational practice and research. Deepening understanding and driving improvement, as defined in 'Called, Connected, Committed', is pivotal to our Inclusion Strategy:

*To lead in education means to seek continually to deepen understanding and wisdom, extend knowledge, and develop professionally. Education is long term, requiring sustained commitment and endurance. Fuller flourishing of children, of staff, of the school community and its wider environment, is always possible, and leaders can inspire and enable the improvements that can help achieve this. Leaders passionately pursue the best and broadest outcomes for their children, removing barriers, empowering teams, and celebrating the successes of others.*

Our Inclusion Strategy seeks to ensure that inclusion is at the heart of what we do – that barriers are removed and that teams are empowered in order to work together and, as a direct consequence, our children and young people are able to flourish as a result of the inspirational leadership across the Trust. Pursuing social justice and wellbeing of all is key – Church education is built on a model of inclusive practice – our staff (at all levels) are called to demonstrate a passion to serve one and all – the disadvantaged, the marginalised and the vulnerable. We call on our leaders to accept vulnerability and to lead generously, with a spirit of grace and collaboration rooted in ethical and moral decision making which celebrate the diversity of their communities and encourage all stakeholders to evaluate evidence carefully and to embrace risk whilst fighting for the children and young people whom we serve to get the very best opportunities.

As members of Three Spires Trust, our school and academy leaders are fortunate: ‘As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another’ (Proverbs 27:17) – our leaders are not alone. They are able to work with each other, to share their experiences, to learn from each other (from the successes and from the challenges) and they are able to wisely contribute to the constant drive to improve inclusivity in education.

## **National Context**

Data from the DfE (DfE, 2018) demonstrates that national rates of exclusions continue to increase year-on-year. As a result of this, the ‘Timpson Review’ was commissioned by the DfE. ‘*Help, Protection, Education: Concluding the Children in Need Review*’ (Sir Edward Timpson, DfE, 2019) highlights many recommendations and drivers. Whilst local authorities have a mandate to react to the content of the Timpson Review, it is right that Three Spires Trust responds and ensures that, at this early stage in our Trust’s development, we seek to ensure that our actions, from the outset, are inclusive at their core.

*What does the data from the Timpson Report show us, and what does it mean for us?*

The key findings from the review highlight 5 key areas:

- scale;
- becoming Looked After;
- pupil population;
- poor educational outcomes;
- and poor lifetime outcomes.

The scale of children who have ever needed a social worker between 2012/13 and 2017/18 is equivalent to 1 in 10 of all children (roughly three, therefore, per average class) at some point either currently or previously over the 6 year period.

Almost two-thirds of children who were **Looked After** in 2017/18 have been on a Child in Need plan at some point in the previous 5 years and nearly 40% had been on a Child Protection Plan. Across our schools, this would mean that, based on the data set from the past 5 years (at the time of writing, and based on core

membership alone), we can predict that 22 children or young people are highly likely to become Looked After (we know that 7 either are already Looked After, or have been Looked After, from this identified cohort).

The Timpson Review found that, in relation to **pupil population**, only 500 schools in the country (2% of schools) did not have a child or young person during the scoping period who had not needed a social worker. None of the core or associate membership (at the time of writing) would fall into this small group of schools.

The review highlighted that “children who have needed a social worker do significantly worse than others at all stages of education. Those on a Child in Need Plan or Child Protection Plan are almost as likely to do poorly as Looked After Children ... children who needed a social worker in the year of GCSEs are half as likely to achieve a strong pass in English and Maths than those who were not. **Poor educational outcomes** persist even after social work involvement ends, where children who needed a social worker up to 4 years prior to GCSEs (ie Year 8 upwards) were between 25 to 50% less likely to achieve a strong pass in English and Maths” – this is a strong piece of evidence which highlights that our Inclusion Strategy must focus on the inclusion of those who have been on the child protection register at any point in the past – it is a formal recognition of the impact of such a period of instability and it highlights the need for us to focus on this group of children and young people in the same way as we do those who have are Previously Looked After and those in the ‘Ever 6’ Pupil Premium cohort, where the disadvantage is ‘deemed’ to have been removed, but that the long-lasting impact of the neglect or the long-lasting impact of the disadvantage cannot be ignored.

Finally, **poor lifetime outcomes** relates to the impact of having a social worker in Year 11 on access to higher education and the achievement of level 2 qualifications. Only 6% (compared to 27%) of those who had a social worker in Year 11 go on to higher education; but perhaps more strikingly, half had still not achieved level 2 qualifications by the age of 21 (compared to only 11% of those who had not had a social worker in that crucial year of their education).

Timpson summarises his conclusion by sharing that:

*the review has established that needing help and protection, even briefly, has a profound impact on children’s educational outcomes. This disadvantage is additional to other needs, although compounded for many children by also having special educational needs or living in a low-income family.*

*Given the complexity of overlapping problems faced by these children and their families – sometimes acute, sometimes more chronic – helping them often requires intensive, invested support. We know that every day, dedicated school staff, social workers and others are working nonstop, in difficult circumstances, to keep children safe, happy and accessing the education they deserve. We have seen how doing so can require hard choices of leaders in schools and social care, even with the ambition for children to succeed shared by many – including parents, despite many struggling themselves with domestic abuse, substance misuse, mental ill health or other issues.*

The Timpson Review highlights four key ‘areas of action’ which the DfE has committed, through the publication of the report, to pursue in order to address ‘some of the most significant systemic challenges to improving educational outcomes’. These four key areas are:

- Visibility – being aware of the students who have ever had a social worker, in order that their progress, their reasonable adjustments and the impact of any necessary targeted intervention, may be closely monitored by colleagues in schools

- Keeping children in education – likelihood of this cohort of children and young people being excluded (be that through persistent absence, off-rolling, exclusion, truancy, complex needs) is more significant than those who have never had social care involvement
- Aspiration – ensuring that this cohort of children and young people are supported to be aspirant is critical
- Support in and around school – this is one of the key drivers in our Inclusion Strategy – Timpson talks about celebrating that which works and ensuring that ‘schools can adopt approaches and deliver interventions that are most effective’ – the data tells us that these children and young people have suffered adversity and the Adverse Childhood Experiences experienced by this cohort are often traumatic – their social, emotional and mental health needs must be met and this requires both trauma informed practitioners across our settings, and access to a wider system of specialist support in our schools and academies.

### *So what?*

Vulnerability is nothing new to educationalists. Our schools and academies seek to support the children and young people in their care on a daily basis; however, the quest for Three Spires Trust to truly be an organisation where the God-given talents of all our children and young people are nurtured and celebrated can only be done if those who are suffering adversity, who are experiencing trauma, who have special educational needs and / or disabilities, who are young carers, who have a social worker, who are otherwise vulnerable are fully included in their educational journey. Children and young people do not have their God-given talents removed as their vulnerability increases, it is the chances and opportunities which affect the ability to realise their full potential.

Over a third of children and young people who had ever needed a social worker in 2017/18 received SEN support or had an Education Health and Care Plan. The DfE statistics in relation to Looked After children highlights that in 2018, almost 40% of those who were Looked After for a period of at least 12 months had emotional and behavioural health scores which were a cause for concern. Of the children who had ever needed a social worker between 2012/13 and 2016/17, according to DfE datasets, 50% were able to achieve a good level of development by the end of their EYFS experience – this is compared to 72% of those who have never needed a social worker. It is important, especially when considering the impact on early years development, to further consider the potential and probable impact of the pandemic – the vast majority of the current cohorts in EYFS (and in Year 1) will not have accessed a full early years education and will, as such, have spent even more of these crucial 0-5 formative years at the heart of the neglectful circumstances, or at the hands of their abusers for extended periods – the impact of this is yet to be fully realised. Timpson advises that ‘if we are to close the attainment gap that persists throughout school, then we must start early’ – this is at the heart of our Inclusion Strategy.

The Timpson Review ends with a clear ‘call to action’. It calls on senior leaders in local authorities to promote educational outcomes as an important part of the role of social care and multi-agency working, and as an important progress measure for children who currently need a social worker. They call on school leaders to create a culture of high educational aspiration, and to be evaluating how this is being achieved, including through support that recognises and responds to the impact of children’s experiences and they seek for other Government departments to continue to work with the team in order to develop the understanding.

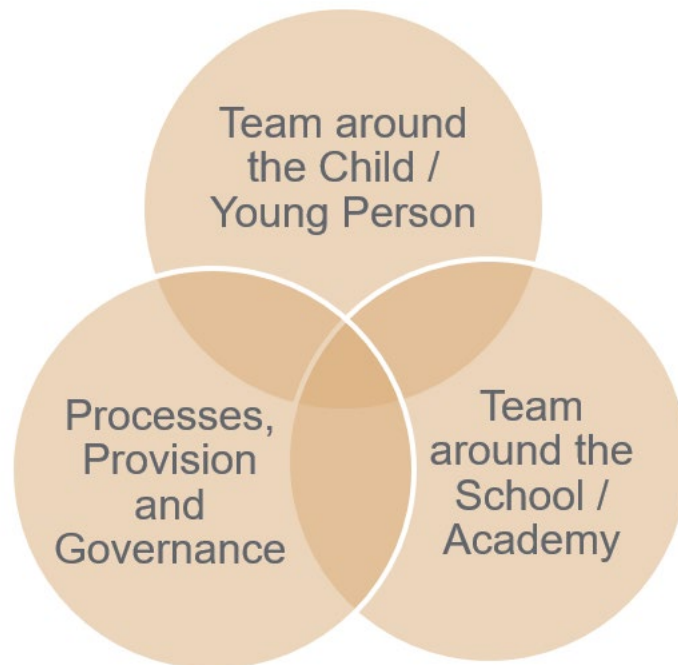
The *Levelling Up* white paper outlines a need to focus on six “capitals” – physical capital, human capital, intangible capital, financial capital, social capital and institutional capital. If Levelling Up is about “aspiring for every place in the UK to have a rich endowment of all six capitals, so that people do not have to leave their



community to live a good life” then, by sheer virtue of the location of our family of member schools and academies, we are mandated to ensure that we support in these areas. Our schools and academies are all in areas highlighted by the Levelling Up agenda; the schools and academies are in areas with very low levels of social capital – the communities that surround a significant proportion of the children and young people on our rolls have high levels of crime, they experience anti-social behaviour (sometimes at their front door), there are few shops, sports and cultural facilities are few. Whilst some of our schools and academies are amidst good housing, this is not the experience of the many. The communities in which many of our families find themselves have been left behind. The Levelling Up white paper highlights that the social narratives told by the communities in these areas can often drive behaviour, economic and financial decisions, but, perhaps most worryingly, they can become self-fulfilling. Three Spires Trust seeks aspiration for all our children and young people, but especially for our most vulnerable – this is not a desire, but this is an imperative. If our children and young people are to experience true success, then it is important that aspiration and celebration must go hand-in-hand with inclusion.

Three Spires Trust recognises that our school leaders seek to foster a culture of high educational aspiration. Through our Inclusion Strategy, we set out our plan to support this, especially for the most vulnerable students – not only those who are already recognised as vulnerable, not only in responding to ‘in the moment’ safeguarding concerns in the most appropriate way possible, but also by supporting our school leaders to deliver on the mandate to recognise and respond to the impact of children and young people’s unique and varied experiences in a way which ensures that *inclusion* is truly embedded in our schools and academies.

### The three strands



- Strand 1: Team around the Child / Young Person
- Strand 2: Team around the Academy
- Strand 3: Processes, Provision and Governance

It is our aim to deliver on Strand 1 by the end of the academic year 2021/2, to deliver on Strand 2 by the end of the academic year 2022/23 and to deliver on Strand 3 by the end of the academic year 2023/24 – the exact nature of strand 3 will develop over time. Strands 1 and 2 are outlined at this stage.

### **Strand 1: Team around the Child / Young Person**

This strand is about ensuring that the structure in our schools and academies is allied with the vision of Three Spires Trust. We believe that inclusion pulls together the strategic elements of the vulnerabilities experienced by an individual child or young person. To that end, it is our vision that the setting's named Designated Safeguarding Lead and the strategic SENCO is the same person – schools may have a deputy and / or assistant SENCO who delivers on the more operational elements of the SENCOs role. It is crucial that the aforementioned senior leaders works very closely with the senior leader with responsibility for behaviour and standards. This relationship is key.

We already have a member of the Trust central team who leads on inclusive practice and is able to advise principals, governors and senior leaders on matters relating to inclusion.

We will create a training offer for school leaders and governors to support and enhance the wider corporate offers in order to support our leaders to better understand the graduated approach in a wider context than simply responding to those identified as having special educational needs and / or disabilities.

We will ensure that our DSLs and their deputies have access to the same training provided by the Trust. We will ensure that there are opportunities for networking across the schools and academies in our Trust in order to share good practice and to support one another.

We will have introduced an “available to all” offer for schools and academies to be able to enhance their core offer and to further support the promotion of quality first teaching strategies.

We will communicate with schools about training that is available from the Trust as well as local and national training providers in order to upskill the professionals working with vulnerable children and young people on a daily basis.

We will commission, as appropriate, external reviews that seek to confirm and celebrate the good practice already evident in our schools and academies, whilst also seeking to support development planning.

We will monitor exclusions across our core member settings.

We will have a full suite of safeguarding, SEND and behaviour policies for our schools in place in readiness for the start of 2022/23. Schools and academies will still need to have some local policies. The full list of Trust-wide policies for 2022/23 will be shared no later than the start of the final half term of the academic year 2021/22.

Development so far:

- There is a Director of Safeguarding and SEND who leads on inclusive practice across the trust in post – full time from January 2022.
- There has been a training offer around inclusive practice and safe working practices this academic year, which will be further refined next academic year.



- Networking opportunities have begun and are scheduled for the remainder of this academic year.
- The Safeguarding and SEND committee has terms of reference in place, but has yet to meet.
- In our secondary schools, the DSL and the Strategic SEND leader is the same person.
- DSLs and their deputies have access to the same training offer.
- Trust training offers are already shared.
- There is a monthly Safeguarding and SEND newsletter which is disseminated to all core and associate members, as well as those who are on the pathway to becoming members.
- We have commissioned an external review of behaviour for one of our core members.
- Trust-wide policies have begun to be written, approved and adopted – as they are adopted they are shared to our core and associate members.
- We are already monitoring exclusions across our core members.

## **Strand 2: Team around the Academy**

This strand is about the wider support for inclusive practices in order to further support individual schools and academies to deliver on its mandate to support vulnerable children and young people – this is about ensuring that Three Spires Trust members are able to offer ‘more’ than that which is part of the core offer from local authorities.

We will commission an Education Psychology offer to trade to our members in order to help to combat the capacity challenges faced by our local authorities and to offer an affordable option to those schools and academies who are not able to access a full provision.

We will seek to commission speech and language assessments for our settings where there is concern about children and young people’s social communication, and / or their receptive and expressive vocabulary.

We will continue to offer to chair strategy discussions about complex children and young people in order to support schools and academies when they consider next steps in their graduated response to a child or young person.

We will support our SENCOs to become Whole School SEND peer reviewers and facilitate reviews across the membership of Three Spires Trust in order to support the ongoing self-evaluation process and leadership development offer to colleagues in schools and academies.

We will ensure that all of our schools and academies have access to trauma informed practice training for staff.

We will ensure that schools and academies can request restorative conferencing as part of a sustainable model which goes beyond that which is available to selected professionals as part of the Staffordshire local authority pilot initiative and ensures that all Three Spires Trust schools and academies have access to this exclusion prevention initiative.

We will develop a support tool to further enhance the Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) programme offered to some of our members by their local authority and ensure that our schools and academies are not limited by geographical location.

We will seek to work with local authorities in order to further develop the alternative provision offers available in the areas covered by our members in order to ensure that there is an appropriate offer for a wider range of our children and young people.

We will develop EAL support.

We will monitor the use of managed moves – the process, the procedure and their impact.

We will monitor EHE and CME across our schools and academies

Development so far:

- We have begun to explore the commissioning of educational psychology offer for our schools and academies.
- We have chaired 13 strategy meetings about children and young people with complex needs this academic year.
- We have facilitated an introduction to relational and restorative practice training for all staff in one member school outside of the Staffordshire local authority pilot initiative.
- We have already had a building analysis completed in relation to one alternative provision offer and a business plan is underway for this initiative.

### **Our outcomes framework**

We will monitor year on year, the following in order to measure the impact of our Inclusion Strategy:

- exclusions data, analysed by vulnerable cohort – will show a reduction year on year;
- attendance data, analysed by vulnerable cohort – will show that our rate of persistent absence will reduce year on year;
- the success of managed moves that are used;
- destination data for those at the end of compulsory school age;
- academic outcomes, analysed by vulnerable cohort – will show an improvement year on year.

Furthermore, we will monitor the use of the graduated approach across our settings in the prevention of exclusion (be that to improve attendance, to prevent escalating behaviours, to support the mental ill-health of children and young people on the SEN register with a primary need of SEMH, or to prevent permanent exclusions).