Thallo
ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Equal Opportunities Policy

Thallo Education Ltd.

VERSION: 1.0
DATE: 25th September 2026
AUTHOR: May MacKay-Morris

Policy Lead	May MacKay-Morris Provision Lead / Director
Approved By	May MacKay-Morris - Director
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Review Date	September 2027 Or sooner, following relevant change.

1. Aim

Thallo Alternative Provision is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in every aspect of its work. We aim to provide a calm, respectful and welcoming environment in which young people, parents and carers, staff, volunteers, visitors and other people working with the provision are treated with dignity and respect and are not subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Thallo will deliver its service professionally and in a way that is culturally and religiously sensitive. We recognise that young people may experience barriers arising from disability, special educational needs, anxiety, communication or sensory differences, previous educational experiences, disadvantage or other individual circumstances. Our approach is need-led and seeks to remove avoidable barriers to participation.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Thallo's directors, employees, sessional practitioners, agency or temporary staff, contractors, volunteers and trainees. It also informs how Thallo works with young people, parents and carers, commissioners, professionals, visitors and other stakeholders.

3. Legal and contractual framework

Thallo complies with the Equality Act 2010 and other equality and human-rights requirements applicable to its activities. The Equality Act protects people in areas including employment, education and the provision of services. Thallo keeps its arrangements under review to ensure they remain appropriate to its activities, premises and service model.

For services commissioned by Suffolk County Council, Thallo will also meet the equality requirements contained in the applicable commissioning agreement, including maintaining an equal opportunities policy, keeping and maintaining equality monitoring for service users as required by the contract, arranging and funding interpreters for children and young people where required as part of the contract price, and considering reasonable amendments requested by the Council.

4. Equality principles

Thallo will:

- treat people fairly, professionally and with dignity and respect;
- not unlawfully discriminate because of a protected characteristic;
- seek to identify and remove barriers that unnecessarily restrict access, participation, learning or employment;
- recognise and respond appropriately to different cultural, religious, communication and accessibility needs;
- promote positive relationships and challenge discriminatory language, harassment, bullying and prejudice;
- make decisions about referrals, provision, staffing and opportunities on relevant, transparent and non-discriminatory grounds;
- ensure equality considerations form part of policy development, risk assessment, recruitment, training and review.

5. Protected characteristics and unlawful treatment

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The way particular protections apply can differ according to the activity concerned and the person's age.

Thallo will not tolerate unlawful direct or indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from disability, harassment or victimisation. People will not be disadvantaged because they have raised, supported or participated in a legitimate equality concern or complaint.

6. Disability and reasonable adjustments

Thallo will consider and make reasonable adjustments where required to reduce substantial disadvantage experienced by disabled people. Adjustments will be considered individually and, where appropriate, proactively as part of referral, placement and activity planning.

Depending on individual need, adjustments may include:

- changes to the physical or sensory environment where reasonably practicable;
- adapted communication, information or instructions;
- flexibility in the structure, pace or presentation of learning;
- access to appropriate aids, equipment or support;
- changes to routines, activities or working practices;
- planned transitions, reduced demands or other reasonable measures that support safe access and participation.

A formal diagnosis will not automatically be required before Thallo considers an adjustment. Decisions will be based on the information reasonably available, the disadvantage experienced, safety, effectiveness and what is reasonable in the circumstances.

7. Young people and access to Thallo

Thallo's suitability decisions will be based on whether the provision can safely and appropriately meet the young person's identified needs within its service model, staffing, environment and commissioned arrangements. A protected characteristic, disability, SEND, religion or belief, cultural background or lack of a formal diagnosis will not in itself be a reason to refuse a placement.

Where a proposed placement presents barriers, Thallo will consider reasonable adjustments and other proportionate measures before deciding whether those barriers can be addressed. Where Thallo cannot safely or appropriately meet a young person's needs, the reasons will be recorded and communicated appropriately to the commissioner.

8. Cultural and religious inclusion

Thallo will respect different cultures, religions, beliefs and family backgrounds. Reasonable arrangements will be considered for matters such as religious observance, dietary requirements, clothing, communication and participation in particular activities.

Learning materials, activities and discussion will be approached respectfully and will avoid unnecessary stereotyping. Staff will be expected to respond appropriately to discriminatory language or behaviour while maintaining Thallo's calm, relational approach.

9. Recruitment, employment and workforce practice

Recruitment, selection, training, supervision, allocation of work and progression will be undertaken fairly and without unlawful discrimination. Reasonable adjustments will be considered for disabled applicants, workers and volunteers where required.

Safer recruitment requirements remain applicable to roles involving children. Equality principles do not prevent Thallo from carrying out lawful safeguarding checks, assessing whether a person can safely perform the intrinsic requirements of a role, or taking proportionate action where safeguarding or safety requires it.

10. Training and staff responsibilities

All staff, volunteers and other adults working on Thallo's behalf are expected to understand and follow this policy. Equality, diversity, respectful practice and reasonable adjustments will be addressed through induction, supervision and ongoing development at a level appropriate to the person's role.

Everyone working for or on behalf of Thallo is responsible for:

- treating young people, families, colleagues and visitors with dignity and respect;
- challenging or reporting discriminatory behaviour appropriately;
- considering individual needs and agreed reasonable adjustments in their practice;
- avoiding assumptions about a person's needs, abilities, identity, culture, religion or family circumstances;
- raising concerns where a policy, practice or environment appears to create an avoidable discriminatory barrier.

11. Reporting concerns

Concerns about discrimination, harassment, victimisation, unequal treatment or failure to consider reasonable adjustments should be raised with:

May MacKay-Morris, Provision Lead / Director | may@thalloeducation.co.uk | 07811143355

A young person or parent/carer may also use Thallo's complaints procedure. Staff and other adults may use the appropriate grievance, safeguarding or whistleblowing route depending on the nature of the concern. Safeguarding concerns must be dealt with under Thallo's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy without delay.

Concerns will be taken seriously, handled sensitively and recorded appropriately. No person will be disadvantaged for raising a genuine concern in good faith or supporting somebody else to raise one.

12. Monitoring and review

The Provision Lead will monitor the operation of this policy through feedback, complaints and concerns, referral and placement decisions, reasonable-adjustment arrangements, workforce practice, relevant incidents and equality-monitoring information collected for commissioned service users where required. Equality information will be handled in accordance with Thallo's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy. Patterns suggesting unequal access, treatment or outcomes will be considered and appropriate action taken.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following a significant equality concern, a material change to Thallo's service or premises, a request from a commissioner, or relevant changes in legislation or guidance.

13. Related policies

- Admissions and Referral Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Complaints procedure
- Staff Training, Monitoring and Supervision Policy