ANTI BULLYING POLICY

ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:	**ALL** Schools require this policy with **no changes** allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools, **except** where a school contact is required as identified in the content of the policy. LGBs will **note** adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
Other related ODBST policies and procedures:	Behaviour Policy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Complaints Policy E-Safety & ICT Acceptable Use Policy SEND Policy
Committee responsible:	SEC
Approved by:	SEC
Date Approved:	February 2025
Review Date:	April 2028

The ODBST is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our schools. If bullying does occur, all staff and pupils should feel able to say and to know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

1. Policy Statement

1.1 ODBST takes great pride in its schools' friendly and approachable ethos and the Christian values which members of the academy trust show towards each other. This considerate behaviour is encouraged at all times in our schools and in line with our ODBST values. We celebrate the fact that everyone in our community is an individual with differing points of view, not that they are better or worse than anyone else.

1.2 The Trustees aim for each of its schools to be safe, friendly and secure places for each pupil to learn and thrive, but this cannot be so for any individual who is in any way bullied. The ODBST promotes and encourages the maintenance of a friendly atmosphere where pupils are empowered to talk openly about bullying, know what it is and the range of bullying behaviours, understand its impact on others and where and how to source support, guidance and resolution.

2. What is Bullying?

2.1. The ODBST understands bullying as '*purposeful actions conducted by an individual or group, either in person or online, and directed against an individual who cannot defend him/herself in the situation'*.

Bullying is usually persistent and repetitive and generally fits a pattern of behaviour. However, there will be occasions when a one-off incident is so significant that it causes long term effects and is therefore categorised as bullying. One example may be extreme public humiliation that deters someone from engaging in discussions or social events.

Bullying can take different forms:

- Verbal bullying: name calling, use of threatening or provocative language etc.
- Psychological bullying: excluding an individual from group play, refusing to talk to or even acknowledge an individual, lying, fake rumours and spreading gossip, encouraging others to turn against someone, leaving someone out constantly and encouraging others to do the same, socially excluding someone, damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance, using humiliating nicknames and continuing when asked to stop
- Physical bullying: hitting, kicking, grabbing an individual, taking or hiding another's property etc.
- Homophobic bullying: bullying when people behave or speak in a way which makes someone feel bullied because of their actual or perceived sexuality. People may be a target of this type of bullying because of their appearance, behaviour, physical traits or because they have friends or family who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning or possibly just because they are seen as being different.
- On-line or cyber bullying: Cyber bullying is any form of bullying which takes place online or through smartphones and tablets and includes social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites, chat rooms; sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm or humiliation; hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send hurtful content while posing as that person; creating dedicated websites that intend to harm, make fun of someone or spread malicious rumours and intimidation to send images of a private or sexual nature.
- Sexual bullying: behaviour, physical or non-physical, where sexuality or gender is used as a weapon against another, behaviour which degrades someone, singles someone out by the use of sexual language, gestures or violence, victimising someone for their appearance, the pressure to act promiscuously and to act in a way that makes others uncomfortable.

2.2. Bullying can be based on a range of targeted issues.

- Racist: Bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religious or cultural practices.
- Homophobic: Discrimination based on sexuality and/or gender identity.
- Sexual: Unwelcome sexual advances, harassment or remarks that are intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation: This could include pressure to send images of a sexual nature.

- Disability: The bullying of those who have special educational needs and disabilities.
- Based on 'difference': Bullying based on any real or perceived difference. This can include, but is not limited to, factors surrounding the way someone looks or dresses, hobbies and interests, family make up, social behaviour.

2.3. Mutual conflict

Mutual conflict is a disagreement, argument or fight in which both parties have equally participated and where there is no imbalance of power. This is not classed as bullying because there is no imbalance of power.

3. Pupils with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities

3.1 The ODBST is committed to supporting those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We recognise that this group of pupils are particularly vulnerable to being bullied and that having a special educational need and/or disability does not mean that these pupils cannot or do not act as perpetrators.

3.2 When a pupil is involved in a bullying incident, a school will review the needs of the pupil and review any potential, unidentified and/or unmet needs.

3.3. When a school is determining support and/or sanctions for bullying, special educational needs and/or disabilities will be taken into account so that the pupil is supported appropriately. The SENDCo from the school will be involved. If necessary, the school will seek advice from external professionals to determine support and where a pupil has an EHCP, an interim review may be called to more formally review support.

4. Aims

4.1. The ODBST acknowledges that bullying does happen from time to time in our schools. It would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. However, it is our aim to:

- ensure a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment, discrimination or any type of bullying behaviour;
- create an environment where all are treated with dignity and respect and where all members of the school community understand that bullying is not acceptable;
- ensure a consistent approach to preventing, challenging and responding to incidents of bullying that occur;
- inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership which helps to maintain a bullying-free environment;
- outline our commitment to continuously improving our approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring and reviewing the impact of our preventative measures.

5. Objectives

5.1. Each ODBST school will hold a school anti-bullying strategy which shows that:

- all allegations of bullying will be carefully investigated;
- pupils, parents and staff will be encouraged to talk openly about the issue;
- as part of the curriculum, greater understanding of bullying in all its forms will be developed ;
- pupils will be taught strategies to help them deal with bullying situations which they may encounter;
- staff will respond calmly and consistently to allegations or incidents of bullying;

- the school will protect and support all parties whilst issues are resolved.

6. Whole School Strategies to minimise bullying

6.1. Trustees, while devolving the bullying strategy to each individual school, would expect each school to set out how**:**

- a regular programme of PSHE is delivered;
- regular Teacher – Class discussion takes place e.g. during circle time, dealing with friendship / playtime issues;
- pupils are taught to effectively support a bullied friend/peer and how to resist "joining in" with bullying;
- pupils suffering from bullying will be encouraged to keep diaries to share with staff/parents;
- a school Anti-Bullying Code is in use, giving clear advice to pupils on what to do if you are a witness or a victim of bullying.

7. How ODBST schools will responds to specific allegations of bullying

7.1. Pupils will know who to talk to. In the first instance this will usually be their class teacher, but it could also be:

- another teacher known to them;
- a Teaching Assistant;
- a Learning Mentor;
- a Lunchtime Supervisory Assistant.

7.2. All pupils should be given every opportunity to report the bullying in the first instance, but it will be the school named adult who will follow up allegations. Therefore, any other adult in receipt of information should feed back to the appropriate adult as soon as possible.

7.3. The appropriate adult will take steps to discuss the problem with the bullies to establish the situation and talk through any issues. An early resolution is sought using these tactics.

7.4. Both bullied and bullying parties should be informed that the situation is being monitored by the adults concerned.

7.5. If there is no improvement, or further bullying occurs, the parents of the bullying child should be contacted in order to come into school to discuss the problem and to make clear that a zero-tolerance policy is being adhered to.

7.6. If further bullying takes place, the school's behaviour, rewards and sanction policy should set out what the school's next steps will be.

7.7. As a result of the discussion, clear expectations are laid down as to:

- expected behaviour and attitudes;
- strategies to support the bullied child, including who they can turn to and when;
- the arrangements for beginning/ending lessons, lunchtimes, starting and ending of the day.

Individual circumstances will determine the precise arrangements to be made.

7.8. Support is given to the perpetrator to raise their self-esteem and develop appropriate social skills e.g.: alternative provision at lunch time for a given period to ensure they do not pose a threat.

8. Recording & Reporting

8.1. Trustees expect all our schools to record bullying at all stages, together with the action taken, through the use of CPOMS. Bullying is classed as a safeguarding issue and both the pupil being bullied, as well as the perpetrator, are regarded as being subject to behaviours which are unsafe. This may be transferred at transition to the next phase of the pupil's education.

8.2. Reporting to governors and Trustees. ODBST expects its school leaders to report on incidents of bullying and of SEND, racist and homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) bullying[1].

8.3. Schools should ensure that pupils know how to report incidents of HBT bullying and that all reports are taken seriously and appropriately logged. The log should be monitored and analysed so that any patterns are identified and any necessary further measures are put in place to prevent HBT bullying. Systems for monitoring and analysing incidents of bullying should include homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying as separate categories. All reporting should be done through CPOMS.

8.4. When bullying has been reported, the following actions will be taken:

- Staff will record the bullying on CPOMS.
- Designated school staff will monitor incident reporting forms and information recorded on CPOMS, analysing the results.
- Designated school staff will produce termly reports summarising the information which the Headteacher will report to the Local Governing Body and the ODBST Executive Safeguarding Lead.
- Support will be offered to the target of the bullying from the school.
- Staff will proactively respond to the bully who will also require support.
- Staff will involve parents and carers and ensure that they are aware of the support being received for the pupil being bullied and for the perpetrator.
- Staff will assess whether any other authorities (such as the police or local authority) need to be involved, particularly when actions take place outside of school.

9. Roles & Responsibilities

- All staff at ODBST schools have a responsibility for implementing this policy and their school strategy and dealing appropriately with incidents that are brought to their attention.
- Schools should appoint someone who will manage bullying in the school, provide support for staff, provide guidance on curriculum development to ensure bullying is a taught element of the school's work and ensure appropriate training is provided for all staff.
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented consistently and effectively.
- The impact of this policy will be monitored by governors and the Executive Safeguarding Lead through regular audit of records of serious incidents and alleged bullying during school visits. The outcome of this monitoring will be reported to Local Governing Bodies and will impact on future development of associated policies and practice.

[1] Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying can be defined as behaviour or language which makes a person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, whether actual or perceived, or because of their association with people who are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (e.g. children of same-sex couples).

10. Entitlement and Inclusion

All pupils, whatever their ability, gender, race, religion, size or weight are entitled to feel safe and have full and equal access to provision both during the school day and during extracurricular activities. All pupils have the right to be listened to and fairly treated if they report or are accused of bullying.

11. Raising awareness / Staff training

11.1. Information about the school's bullying strategy must be made available to parents on the school's website and on request.

11.2. ODBST schools are encouraged to take part annually in 'Anti-bullying Week' to highlighting positive behaviours and attitudes.

11.3. New staff should be inducted into the school's safeguarding and anti-bullying procedures on arrival. This training should be refreshed for the whole staff every two years.

12. **Review**

12.1. The policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if relevant. The relevant body, through the School Effectiveness Committee, will monitor any concerns or complaints raised in relation to the policy on a similar triennial basis.

13. Delegation

13.1. The relevant body has chosen to delegate its functions to Local Governing Bodies and Headteachers as set out in this policy.