

Safeguarding Policy

About this Policy

Church schools in the Diocese of Oxford educate more than 60,000 pupils. The ODBE supports and serves these schools to be safe places where every child can flourish.

Our commitment to safeguarding is rooted in the Christian understanding that every child and young person deserves love, care and protection because each one is precious and made in the image of God. Keeping children safe is everybody's responsibility.

Our approach to safeguarding says much about our organisational culture, the extent to which we value the children we serve, and the extent to which we apply the same standards to ourselves as we apply to our schools.

There is a clear duty for everyone supporting or working with children and young people to safeguard and promote their welfare and an expectation that everyone who works for or represents ODBE will behave in an exemplary manner towards the staff and pupils with whom they come into contact.

This policy applies to ODBE staff and consultants

This policy does **not** apply to Church schools, because the responsibility for safeguarding in a school rests with the governing body or academy trustees.

Legislative Framework

ODBE is required by **Section 5A of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016** to comply with requirements issued by the House of Bishops on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The Church of England has published a suite of policy and practice guidance to which the ODBE has due regard including training expectations set out in **Safeguarding: learning and development** published in 2021 under Section 5:

- ["Keeping Children Safe in Education"](#) - DFE (2025)
- The Church of England Safeguarding e-manual [Safeguarding e-manual | The Church of England](#), specifically the chapter on Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults – CofE (2021) [Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults | The Church of England](#)

- Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees Charity Commission safeguarding guidance for trustees (2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children - DfE (2023)
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework sets out the standards that schools and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5, including ensuring children are kept healthy and safe.
- The Ofsted Inspection Framework sets out the basis on which inspectors judge whether safeguarding is effective in education settings.

Expectations

ODBE **staff** are expected to:

- Abide by the policies set out in the ODBE Staff Handbook including the Code of Conduct
- Undertake refresher safeguarding training every three years
- Support and promote a healthy Christian culture within ODBE in which openness, transparency and honesty lead to ongoing organisational learning and development

ODBE **consultants and contractors** are expected to:

- Abide by the policies set out in the Consultant Handbook including the Code of Conduct
- Undertake refresher safeguarding training every three years
- Support and promote a healthy Christian culture within ODBE in which openness, transparency and honesty lead to ongoing organisational learning and development

ODBE **staff, consultants and contractors who give advice** in relation to safeguarding are expected to:

- Ensure that advice about appointments promotes safer recruitment practices
- Ensure that advice about safeguarding policies and processes reflects the requirements of the relevant legislative frameworks
- Ensure that advice reflects current best practice by maintaining their own professional development

ODBE **staff, consultants and contractors who visit education settings** are expected to:

- Hold an enhanced DBS certificate
- Work within the legislative frameworks and the school's own safeguarding and behaviour policy
- Be alert to safeguarding concerns

- Respond in line with the school's own policy in the event of a disclosure
- Ensure risk assessments consider safeguarding risks, including for those who are most vulnerable
- Avoid physical contact with children Not use mobile technology to contact or take photographs of children
- Share any concerns noted during the visit with senior leaders, preferably the DSL or Headteacher, and ensure that this is noted in the Note of Visit e.g. 'concerns about the open gate were shared with the Headteacher'.

The **Diocesan Director of Education (DDE)** is expected to:

- Be the Safeguarding Serious Incident Reporter
- Appoint an ODBE Adviser with responsibility for Safeguarding
- Ensure any photographs used by ODBE are used with the permission of the child's school and in line with the consent and safeguarding requirements of the school

The **ODBE Adviser with responsibility for safeguarding** is expected to:

- Be qualified to Level 3
- Oversee training for ODBE staff
- Provide advice for ODBE staff
- Provide support and advice to schools with safeguarding queries relating to children
- Maintain an open dialogue with the Diocese of Oxford Head of Safeguarding to ensure a joined-up response to allegations or incidents involving both schools and clergy/ churches
- Where possible, work closely with LA safeguarding link personnel to collaboratively support pupils and staff in ODBE schools.

ODBE **trustees** are expected to:

- Attend safeguarding refresher training for charity trustees once every three years
- Appoint one Trustee as the Trustee Lead for Safeguarding. This person will be the point of contact for the DDE or any member of ODBE staff wishing to raise a concern or make an allegation.
- Approve the process for reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission
- Approve the process for dealing with a safeguarding concern or allegation that relates to a member of ODBE, a consultant or contractor or a Trustee
- Periodically review the effectiveness of this policy

The **Executive Committee of the ODBE Board** is expected to:

- Make decisions on behalf of the ODBE Board in relation to reporting safeguarding serious incidents to the Charity Commission insofar as any such decision requires a rapid response that falls outside of the usual meeting cycle

Responding to an allegation

If the DDE receives an allegation against a member of ODBE staff, consultant or contractor involving pupils/students in a school:

- The DDE will contact the LADO within one working day of all allegations that come their attention, or that are made directly to the police, and will follow their advice
- The DDE will work with the LADO and any other agencies which may then become involved
- The DDE will determine, in the event of an investigation being requested, the most appropriate person to carry out the investigation.

If a member of ODBE staff, consultant or contractor wishes to raise a concern or make an allegation against a member of staff within the ODBE working environment:

- They should raise the allegation with the DDE
- The DDE, in receipt of an allegation, will seek advice from the Director of People to determine the nature of the allegation and will then follow the most appropriate policy and procedures (e.g., complaints, online behaviour, gross misconduct)
- The DDE will additionally consider the allegation with regards to the role and the possible impact on working in schools (KCSiE 2025)
- The DDE will determine, in the event of an investigation being required, the most appropriate person to carry out the investigation
- In all cases the DDE will follow policy and act fairly and openly
- If the allegation concerns the DDE, ODBE staff should contact the Trustee Lead for Safeguarding

The ODBE Safeguarding Serious Incident Reporter is **Tony Wilson**

The ODBE Adviser with special responsibility for Safeguarding is

The Safeguarding lead for ODBE trustees is

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