



Oxford Diocesan  
**BUCKS SCHOOLS TRUST**



## The ODBST Strategic Safeguarding Plan 2023-2025

In order to empower our unique schools to excel, we work under a key umbrella of core principles to enable all of our ODBST children and adults to remain safe in our schools. We aspire for every pupil and adult to 'experience life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). We have created a strategy to ensure that, as a Trust, we work together to ensure that when our children leave us, they do so suitably equipped with the right knowledge and understanding and that they are well prepared for their next stage in education and in life; we know that it is only when any individual feels safe and is safe that we can fulfil our core aspiration.

We work to all recent legislations and guidance around effective safeguarding practice including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- OFSTED framework for inspecting schools 2022
- OFSTED review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges 2021
- Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021

### Service

Our ODBST family currently serves 11 individual schools with Local Governing Bodies, and a Shared Services Team, all supported by a Board of Trustees and a Board of Members. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and so our plan encompasses all employees and volunteers who are part of our ODBST family and is there to serve our schools and their communities so that they can be the best that they can.

### Culture and Environment: Inclusivity

We expect the environment in all of our schools and in all of our workplaces, to be a highly inclusive one that protects all of our children and young people, their families and our adult workforce. We expect to see a culture that embraces transparency within systems and within leadership so that everyone knows what the roles and expectations are of themselves and of everyone else.

We have a clear suite of safeguarding policies that are reviewed regularly and we know that this is crucial to establishing the principles of what we want and expect. However, we are equally clear that it is only when our policies are put into practice in a way which is ethical,



consistent and highly appropriate that our safeguarding practice becomes a highly effective safeguarding culture that keeps everyone safe.

### Empowerment

We want and expect every single member of our ODBST family to feel empowered to keep themselves and everyone else in our community safe. We want everyone to feel that they are able to raise a concern, whether large or seemingly small, because we are working in a culture which supports this.

We want to empower our leaders, at all levels in our Trust, to have the right tools to lead safeguarding and to have the right training and support, including supervision, whilst protecting their own mental health and well-being.

We will ensure that there is rigorous monitoring and quality assurance across our Trust so that we have a single and consistent approach that keeps everyone safe, and we will seek to achieve this through an Ensure – Assure model.

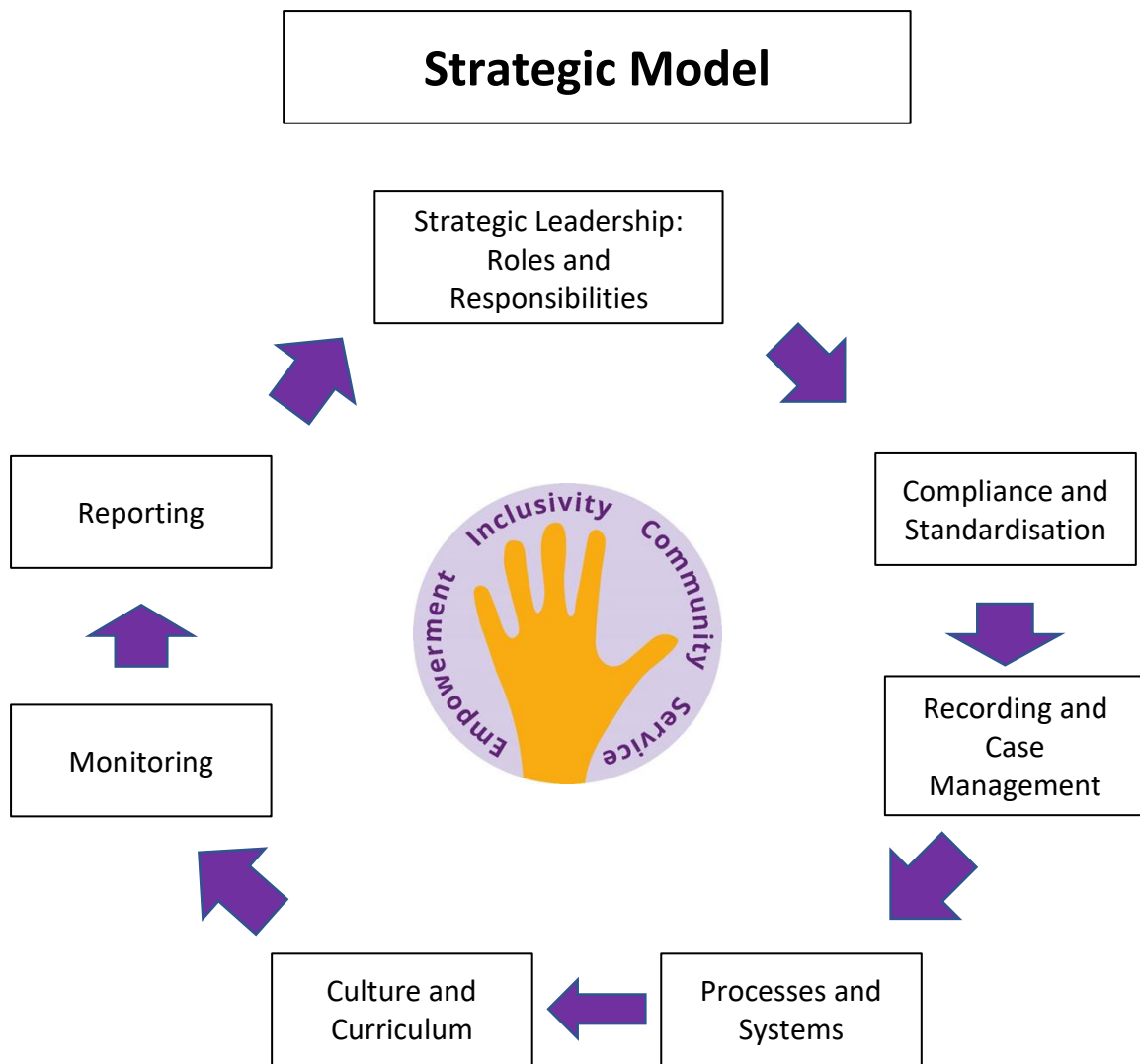
### Community

We believe that together we learn, love, achieve and flourish and so our strategy embraces all parts of our community from our families to the bank of professionals who support us. We work within two safeguarding local authorities and this poses us both challenges and opportunities as we seek to embrace the strong practice from both and to work effectively with each, to provide a seamless and consistent approach.

Every time a child or adult steps into one of our schools/workplaces, we want that person to know that they are safe and for them to be safe.

Our strategy will ensure that we work closely together as a Trust and also with our safeguarding colleagues in health and social care, with our local safeguarding boards of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes and with the Thames Valley Police Force, to follow their guidance and to work together both strategically and operationally.





### Strategic Leadership

The management of safeguarding is led by our Trustees, overseen by Members, who have the responsibility to ensure that all children and adults are safe in our schools and that safeguarding is a core priority.

- This leadership responsibility is shared with the CEO of the MAT, Sulina Piesse, and the Executive Safeguarding Lead for the Trust, Jan Martin
- Trustees have a named safeguarding lead: Michael Mill

Trust leaders have the responsibility to build a clear strategy that supports our schools so that there is a clear and consistent process in place that is understood and followed by everyone.

The strategic plan builds on our 7 areas of work:

- Strategic Management
- Ensure that compliance and standardisation processes are in place



- Ensure a clear recording and case management system is in place and that it is used consistently and proportionately
- Ensure that schools are working together with lead partners and professionals in a multi-agency network
- Assure the practice and culture, ensuring that it remains fit for purpose and fully responsive to the safeguarding needs of our communities
- Assure effective and consistent practice through rigorous monitoring
- Assure the reporting systems to leaders include a clear strategic response as well as identified operational responses

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

In place already is a clearly delegated line of responsibility at school level:

- every LGB has a nominated safeguarding governor;
- every ODBST Headteacher is expected to be the school DSL;
- schools are expected to have at least x1 further DSL who is also a senior teacher; some schools may also nominate further members of staff to take on this role depending on the size of the school and pupil demographics.

All safeguarding leads will have a discreet job description with clearly defined time allocations for fulfilling their role. These job descriptions will be transparent and consistent across the Trust so that there is shared understanding and shared expectation. Time allocations will be defined at an organisation level.

Job descriptions will be available on the ODBST website and should be clearly displayed on school websites.

- Safeguarding Lead for the Trustees
- Executive Safeguarding Lead (ESL)
- Nominated Safeguarding Governor
- DSLs in schools

A training programme is put in place to enable all ODBST staff to fulfil their roles:

- annual KCSiE training will be given to each school and to all members of the SST and Trustees;
- termly updates for school staff will continue to be given in advance of each new term;
- LGB training will be available each term around the strategic leadership of safeguarding;
- training in line with OFSTED expectations will be delivered annually, or earlier where there is a change in the Inspection Handbook, for school leaders;
- safer recruitment training will be delivered for school to do with matters pertaining to the SCR and personnel files. Formal safer recruitment training should be sought from suitably accredited providers;
- DSL supervision sessions will be explored for each HUB;
- termly strategic management sessions will be delivered for all DSLs;
- termly session for Family Liaison Officers in school who appoint to this post;
- schools should continue to attend local authority termly briefing sessions;

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- schools will continue to access all safeguarding training for teachers including the 3 year refresher training, need specific training such as that around Prevent/e-safety/FGM/ and all DSL compliant training.

We will consider the advantages and practicalities of training provision and providers across the Trust, determining what is bought in centrally and what training can be delivered centrally as well as that which will continue to be accessed at local authority level.

### **Compliance and Standardisation**

Across all ODBST there will be some elements of safeguarding management that are standardised. This is important because we need to have clear oversight of how safeguarding works in every setting and to be clear that standards and expectations are consistent.

- There will continue to be a single safeguarding suite of policies which are used across all ODBST schools. These are written by the ESL and personalised to fit in the practices within each setting as appropriate.
- The new SDP format includes a section around how the strategic management of safeguarding will be developed in each school. Each school should include this section.
- Job descriptions for DSLs are consistent across the ODBST. September 23.
- DSLs will have a specific target around safeguarding as part of their performance management.
- All job descriptions should include a section on safeguarding and the extent to which this is fulfilled by individuals should be addressed through performance management. Over the next academic year, 2023-24, we will roll out single performance management documentation.
- Our staff Code of Conduct is shared and agreed with all ODBST employees and volunteers. Where there are concerns, our appropriate policies are followed. Ongoing.
- Headteacher reports to LGBs should be presented on a consistent format and will include a standardised safeguarding report.
- The proforma for presenting safeguarding data to the ESL and LGBs will be a consistent one, as introduced in March 23. This will enable all schools to reflect the key issues and drivers in their setting.
- Safer recruitment practices are to remain consistent across the ODBST and are overseen by HR. Part 3 of KCSiE 22 should be referred to carefully.
- There will be at least annual training on the SCR and the maintenance of personnel files to ensure consistency.
- A new, electronic, SCR system will be investigated by the ODBST SST and decisions shared with schools.
- Any internal DSL training will meet the expectations of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes safeguarding systems and practices.
- All schools will use CPOMS to record safeguarding concerns around children. Work needs to be undertaken to ensure that there is consistency of the setting used within CPOMS.



- A single system for recording concerns around adults will be explored and decisions communicated to schools. 2023-24.

### **Recording and Case Management**

- All schools will have a clear system for recording low level concerns.
- All schools should have an allocated person for working with families to address low level concerns and to be able to sign post families to early help resources. This may be formalised as a Family Liaison Officer role.
- All safeguarding concerns pertaining to a child should be recorded on CPOMS.
- All concerns are followed up carefully and consistently until there is a confidence that the child is no longer unsafe.
- There is a consistent clarity over behaviours which are unsafe or which indicate that a child might be unsafe.
- The decisions taken as to the level of support from the local authority for an individual child or family are made according to relevant local authority thresholds or other professional thresholds and are not an ODBST decision.
- All decisions regarding referrals and practices pertaining to support, to meetings, or future decisions, including the decision to end or increase support, rests with local authority professionals and are not ODBST decisions.
- All concerns pertaining to adults are recorded and stored safely by the Headteacher. The ODBST ESL is informed and, where appropriate, the LADO and HR will be informed. A consistent, electronic solution for the recording of concerns around adults will be explored.

### **Processes and Systems**

- Our ODBST safeguarding and child protection policy is clearly displayed on our ODBST website and on all school websites.
- All associated policies are displayed on school websites and on our ODBST website.
- In order to ensure that policies are up to date:
  - The ESL will write policies indicating where schools can personalise policies to their individual settings.
  - School leaders will receive policies through the LGB.
- Strategic training will be delivered termly for DSLs and LGB Safeguarding Leads and attendance at this training will be required.
- Training will be available for Family Liaison Officers and for those in schools responsible for liaising with families.
- All schools use the Inventory signing in system and this is done in a consistent way with consistency around how adults sign in and when they are added to the DBS list on Inventory.
- Commercial systems will be further explored to establish effectiveness against potential costs. We will explore systems that enable us to potentially keep children safer and which reduce rather than increase workload for school leaders. 2023-25
- The use of external trainers and training packages will be explored. 2023-25



## **Culture and Curriculum**

We celebrate the uniqueness of our individual schools and know that curriculum will work differently in each setting. We expect that there will be a consistently positive culture of safeguarding in our schools and that our key principles, alongside our vision and values, will be realised in all matters pertaining to keeping children and adults safe.

- The culture will be explored from the view point of all stakeholders including prospective parent and visitors; the extent to which the school is perceived to be a safe place from the moment it is entered.
- The culture will be one that encourages professional curiosity and which enables all adults and children to raise a concern safely without fear of redress or implication.
- School staff, including leaders and governors, will be able to articulate the school culture around safeguarding and there will be a complete consistency of message from all.
- The curriculum will have key points where safeguarding, including e-safety, is taught explicitly and the end points of knowledge and understanding will be clear. Leaders will check to ensure that children achieve these end points.
- The PSHE and RSE curriculum will be a strong one and it will be taught well because leaders have prioritised this. Leaders will check to ensure that implementation and impact achieve the intended end points.
- The whole curriculum, including the wider curriculum, will have a clear thread of safeguarding running it through it. As a result, children will know what being safe means and what to do if they are not safe.
- The links between safeguarding, attendance and behaviour will be clear and children with SEND will be a particular focus. ODBST monitoring of this will be undertaken at least termly.
- All surveys to parents, children and other stakeholders will include questions around safeguarding.
- School safeguarding effectiveness will be captured through visit reports from LGBs, from the whole SST and from external visitors such as OFSTED and the local authority safeguarding teams.

## **Monitoring**

Monitoring needs to happen internally within each school, within the ODBST and externally from professionals such as OFSTED.

- Within schools there should be weekly safeguarding meetings where all DSLs meet to identify key concerns and trends. Strategic decisions should be made as to how these concerns will be met and how trends will be addressed.
- The LGB Safeguarding Lead should have a clear monitoring cycle where records such as the SCR are checked, where checks are undertaken to ensure staff are consistent in their understanding of safeguarding and checks to ensure that children are feeling safe.
- The ODBST ESL will set up a monitoring cycle for strategic checks and this will follow core themes which will be determined following analysis of termly returns. Examples of the themes might be identified categories of concern, record keeping,



safer recruitment and so on. Attendance will be monitored on a termly basis as part of the attendance strategy.

- School leaders, including the LGB Safeguarding Lead and Trustees, will need to align to these identified themes so that there is a single approach and to avoid DSLs becoming overloaded with monitoring exercises.
- Safeguarding will form a part of all annual categorisation work.
- Occasionally whole school reviews will be carried out by the ESL and/or CEO to give a greater insight into the practices and culture of a school. These will prioritise schools where there might be some concerns already around L&M, schools who are TAS schools and schools where a concern is raised from a stakeholder.
- There is a role for external monitoring of schools to give a wider view of individual settings and to give external validation to internal ESL judgements. This will be explored further during 2023-4.

### **Reporting**

Clear and accurate reporting is crucial to the success of the strategy so that all stakeholders know and understand where we are as a Trust and to ensure that next steps are identified accurately and proportionately.

- We need to strengthen the settings on CPOMS so that we can introduce consistent mechanisms for reporting that reduce DSL workload.
- The ESL and LGBs must receive the termly reports. We will use the ODBST termly reporting template until such a time as schools can share the same information directly through CPOMS.
- The data must be understood, analysed and acted upon at school level so that where there are concerns, the risks are reduced for children. For example, if there are high numbers of playground incidences at lunchtime, then the school must put in place factors to reduce the risks and therefore the number of incidences.
- The ESL will report to the AEC and CEO at least termly with regards to the management of safeguarding in schools, including information around the termly focus and data pertaining to attendance and behaviour.
- The ESL will meet with the Trustee Safeguarding Lead at least termly.
- The ESL will report to all Trustees on a termly basis at the TBM to identify effectiveness of the strategy, areas of improvement and areas for further development.

### **Strategic Leadership**

Leaders at all levels, including Trustees, will review the effectiveness of the plan at the end of each academic year and ensure that any necessary changes are put in place as the result of internal or external feedback, judgements or as a result of any external changes in legislation or guidance.

Feedback will be taken from stakeholders at least annually.

