



ODYSSEY HOUSE SCHOOL

# Equality, Diversity & Respect Policy

Odyssey Education Services is Registered in England and Wales, company number 1162321,  
registered at 224 Venture House, Arlington Square, Downshire Way, Bracknell, RG12 1WA.

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## 1. Policy Statement

Odyssey Education Services is an independent specialist school committed to providing a safe, inclusive and aspirational environment for all pupils, many of whom have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

We recognise that:

- Many pupils experience multiple layers of vulnerability.
- Equality and safeguarding are intrinsically linked.
- Inclusion requires proactive and individualised support.

We are committed to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering respect and understanding
- Removing barriers to participation
- Meeting individual needs through reasonable adjustments

Inclusion is embedded within our safeguarding, curriculum, therapeutic and pastoral approaches.

## 2. Legal & Regulatory Framework

This policy operates in accordance with:

- Equality Act 2010
- Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSR)
- SEND Code of Practice (2015, as amended)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Acts 1989 & 2004
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- UK GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018

## 3. Protected Characteristics

Under the Equality Act 2010, protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In a specialist setting, disability is often central to our provision. We recognise that many pupils may also experience intersectionality (e.g. disability and race, disability and gender identity).

## 4. Our Specialist Context

As a specialist provision:

- All pupils have identified additional needs.
- Many pupils may have experienced trauma, exclusion or discrimination.
- Some pupils may present behaviours linked to unmet needs.

We do not treat behaviour resulting from disability as a disciplinary issue without careful assessment and reasonable adjustment.

## 5. Reasonable Adjustments

We will:

- Make reasonable adjustments to policies, practices and environments
- Adapt curriculum delivery
- Provide assistive technology where appropriate
- Adjust behaviour expectations where linked to SEND
- Ensure sensory needs are accommodated
- Modify communication methods (e.g. visual supports, AAC, simplified language)

Failure to make reasonable adjustments may constitute unlawful discrimination.

## 6. Inclusive Curriculum

Our curriculum will:

- Be appropriately differentiated
- Promote dignity and self-worth
- Include representation of diverse identities
- Support pupils to understand equality in an age-appropriate manner
- Promote British values in line with Prevent
- Include therapeutic and social communication development where appropriate

We ensure curriculum materials are sensitive to trauma and neurodiversity.

## 7. Behaviour, Discipline & Equality

In specialist provision:

- Behaviour policies must account for disability-related behaviour.
- Sanctions will not be applied without considering reasonable adjustments.

- Fixed-term or permanent exclusions will be carefully scrutinised for equality impact.
- Behaviour plans will consider communication needs, trauma history and sensory regulation.

We monitor behaviour data by protected characteristic to identify disproportionality.

## 8. Safeguarding & Vulnerability

We recognise that pupils with SEND:

- Are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation
- May struggle to report concerns
- May not recognise discriminatory behaviour

We will:

- Provide additional safeguarding support where needed
- Use accessible reporting mechanisms
- Monitor discriminatory incidents closely
- Record and respond to prejudice-based incidents

All discriminatory incidents are logged and reviewed by senior leadership.

## 9. Anti-Bullying & Prejudice

We do not tolerate:

- Racist behaviour
- Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic behaviour
- Sexist harassment
- Disability-based bullying
- Religious intolerance
- Online abuse

In a specialist context, we recognise some language may reflect communication difficulties. Where this occurs:

- Education and restorative approaches will be prioritised
- Support plans will address underlying needs
- Persistent or intentional behaviour will be addressed through formal procedures

## 10. Admissions

Our admissions process:

- Is fair and transparent

- Is based on the school's ability to meet need
- Does not discriminate unlawfully
- Includes careful consideration of reasonable adjustments

## 11. Staff Equality & Recruitment

We are committed to:

- Fair recruitment processes
- Equal access to CPD
- Reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities
- Inclusive workplace culture
- Addressing discriminatory behaviour among staff

All staff must model inclusive behaviour consistent with safeguarding duties.

## 12. Accessibility

We maintain and review an Accessibility Plan addressing:

- Physical accessibility
- Curriculum accessibility
- Information accessibility

This includes:

- Adapted learning materials
- Sensory-friendly environments
- Accessible digital platforms

## 13. Monitoring & Equality Impact

We monitor:

- Pupil progress by group
- Behaviour incidents by protected characteristic
- Exclusion data
- Attendance
- Complaints
- Recruitment and workforce diversity

This helps us identify patterns and address inequity.

Data monitoring complies with UK GDPR.



## 14. Equality Objectives

The school will set measurable equality objectives every 1–3 years. Examples may include:

- Reducing disability-related bullying incidents
- Increasing cultural representation in curriculum resources
- Improving attendance among specific vulnerable cohorts
- Enhancing accessibility of communication materials

Progress will be reviewed annually by leadership and proprietor.

## 15. Roles & Responsibilities

### Proprietor / Governing Body

- Ensure compliance with ISSR and Equality Act
- Review equality objectives
- Monitor safeguarding and equality trends

### Headteacher

- Lead inclusive culture
- Ensure reasonable adjustments
- Oversee monitoring and reporting

### SENCO / Therapy Leads

- Advise on disability adjustments
- Support inclusive planning
- Monitor intervention impact

### Staff

- Deliver inclusive teaching
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Report concerns

### Pupils

- Treat others with respect
- Engage in restorative processes

## 16. Complaints

Concerns regarding discrimination may be raised via:

- Safeguarding procedures

- Behaviour reporting systems
- Complaints policy
- Whistleblowing policy

All complaints are investigated fairly and promptly.

## **17. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- Ofsted updates guidance
- Significant incidents occur
- Monitoring identifies inequality trends

## **2025 Compliance Position**

This policy meets expectations for:

- Independent School Standards
- Ofsted inspection (specialist provision)
- Safeguarding audit
- Equality Act compliance
- SEND best practice governance