

Dear Candidate,

On behalf of the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST), I would like to thank you for your interest in our vacancy.

We are a dynamic and growing Multi Academy Trust with schools across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. We believe that by building effective relationships between our schools and by encouraging them to play their fullest part in the networks to which they belong, that we can work collaboratively to raise attainment and ensure schools improve together.

In the same way that we are committed to the highest professional standards from our staff, we ensure that all our schools have high aspirations for their pupils, not just in the key curriculum areas but in those wider aspects of education that ensure our young people leave school fit to be caring and effective citizens in the world of tomorrow.

ODBST is a place where all are welcome; both Church of England schools and community schools, for staff and pupils of all faiths and none, where academic excellence abounds and where pupils and staff are enabled, valued and encouraged to become outward looking, resilient learners and professionals.

Our four core values of Inclusivity, Community, Service and Empowerment are central to all we do.

We look forward to receiving your application.



Sulina Piesse

Chief Executive Officer, Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust



Our Vision and Values

“Empowering our unique schools to excel”



We aspire for every pupil and adult to ‘experience life in all its fullness’ (John 10:10). Each of our schools has a unique character of its own and we will work to ensure that this vision embraces all our pupils and adults, regardless of background and belief.

We empower our schools to deliver a broad, enriched and exciting curriculum, coupled with a shared zest for life and learning.

We have identified 4 core values: Inclusivity, Community, Service, Empowerment that resonate with what we believe the ODBST Learner and Leader should follow. They reflect the values that are central to our schools and the diocese. Through our values, we aim for excellence for everyone in our Trust. Building on the uniqueness of our pupils, families and school communities, we strive to enable everyone to develop and thrive intellectually, socially, culturally and spiritually.





At ODBST this means that everyone is accepted and supported, regardless of faith or culture. We will strive for everyone to be given every opportunity to reach their potential. We believe everyone is unique and everyone matters.

Many pupils and staff in our schools will come from diverse home backgrounds and our pupils will be at different stages of their own academic and spiritual journey during their time in school.

All pupils will receive support, guidance and challenge so that they are motivated, ambitious and courageous individuals who seek to be the best they can be. We embody the experience of an inclusive community, where we share our gifts, where the emphasis is on what we can contribute, rather than on what we might receive and where we give to each according to need.

“Our differences are our strength as a species and as a world community” Nelson Mandela

At ODBST we work in unison with all our families. Together we learn, love, achieve and flourish. Within our family of schools, each individual is encouraged to discover and grow their talents to their fullest potential.

We believe by encouraging, inspiring and building each other up we secure the best outcomes for every member of our community.

We believe quality relationships and partnerships are a central element of interdependence: all are needed and valued and each person is important. We will work together to support each other so that everyone can make a contribution and everyone feels included. We encourage everyone to have a sense of pride in their community and the wider world.

“The minute we become an integrated whole, we look through the same eyes and we see a whole different world together”

Azizah Al-Hibri





We encourage everyone to look after themselves and others around them. We encourage children in our schools to seek the common good in all that they do through acts of kindness. ODBST believes that our gifts and talents are to be used in ways that will improve the lives of themselves and others. We help children to develop skills that will allow them to participate fully and contribute positively to the social and cultural life of modern Britain, maximising opportunities for our children to serve their school and local community. We create a culture where serving one another and the wider community is celebrated and seen as an important mark of character development. We regularly invite visitors to our schools who are making a difference to society through their service and courageous advocacy, to inform and inspire us and to present positive role models with ethical and moral integrity for us to follow.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others" Mahatma Gandhi

At ODBST we will encourage everyone to trust in their own capabilities and to recognise their potential. We want to challenge ourselves to be the best we can be – even when this becomes hard. We will do this by leading by example, supporting and guiding one another, celebrating accomplishments, providing opportunities for all, developing confidence, resilience and perseverance in both our children and our adults. We will encourage curiosity with a mindset of continuous improvement and personal growth. We want our pupils to be able to say, 'I am special because..... and I am learning to excel at.....'

"There is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind" Virginia Woolf



Background

ODBST is a Diocesan Multi Academy Trust (MAT) established by the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (ODBE) in September 2017 to provide an organisation for schools seeking to become an academy within a MAT.

ODBST is open for schools within the Buckingham episcopal area (which covers Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes). It is a mixed MAT; any school is able to apply to join:

- voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, academy or community;
- primary or secondary;
- mainstream or special;
- self-converter, and eventually sponsored.
- free Schools

ODBST supports its unique schools to excel. The vision is for our schools to be afforded as much autonomy as possible, with maximum devolved powers from the Board of Trustees. Each academy is supported to strive for excellence, with a dedicated core team in partnership with the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education.

Growth of ODBST

The ODBST was established in 2017 and since grown to become a family of eleven schools, with more in the pipeline. The pace at which the growth of ODBST happens depends on demand from local schools (as The Oxford Diocese's current policy is for Church schools to come to their own decision about whether academisation is right for their own circumstance) as well as the permission of the Secretary of State for Education.

It is expected that Free Schools will form part of the Trust; with the significant housing growth across Buckinghamshire, and in line with the ODBE strategy to ensure new communities are able to access the excellent education offered by Church of England schools, the Trustees have agreed to apply for Free School opportunities within the county.

With sponsored status the Regional Schools Commissioner has already asked us to take on a failing school which the Trust and its schools have risen to with great energy.

We work closely with our sister MAT, ODST, which has over 40 academies across Oxfordshire and Berkshire.



ODBST Shared Services

Central services are funded through a service charge from each school's General Annual Grant (GAG) to provide the ongoing support for ODBST schools to run effectively. ODBST schools are provided with the following:

School Improvement

- A bespoke package of school improvement support visits provided by ODBST officers
- Half-termly visits from a Trust Challenge Partner to monitor and advise on a range of school improvement topics
- Rigorous safeguarding resources and support including whole Trust membership of CPOMS
- Support for the development of effectiveness governance
- A programme of support for Ofsted, pre visit and during any inspection
- Specialist SEND support for all ODBST schools
- Policies are made available for all schools to utilise, some of which are mandatory and some which can be tailor made for individual settings
- Support for the appointment process of senior leaders in school
- Unlimited telephone and email access to advice from experienced advisers
- Specialist RE support, support for collective worship and SIAMS inspection advice from the Diocese of Oxford schools team (two visits in one year)
- Professional development and training for Teaching Assistants, Teachers and School Leaders

Finance & Audit

- Individual school bank accounts enable local monitoring of cashflow and flexibility with purchasing.
- All schools use the same financial IT system for budgeting and financial monitoring.
- Annual external and internal audit requirements are centrally managed, including pension audits.
- A support network for school business managers, including training.
- Central team supports schools with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook.
- One Gift Aid account with HMRC to recover gift aid claims, one registration for the Trust.
- Centralised VAT recovery on behalf of the schools, again one registration.
- SRMSAT submitted by Trust based on data from the common finance system.

Human Resources

- Support from our team of HR professionals who know each school and are able to provide consistent advice and guidance on all aspects of HR (policies, recruitment, restructures, disciplinary, appraisal etc).
- Trust (through its centrally appointed payroll provider) issue employment contracts, at the request of schools who lead on local recruitment.
- Membership of the Teacher Pension Scheme and Local Government Pension Scheme ensures staff retain pension benefits.
- Wellbeing helpline and resources (Health Assured).



Data Protection

- ODBST has one registration with the ICO on behalf of all its schools and one central Data Protection Officer.

Health and Safety

- Our professional Health & Safety Competent Advisor engages regularly with schools to assure their legal duties, ensure the school site is safe and secure, and undertake annual condition inspection of PE, outdoor play and DT or ceramic equipment.

Admissions

- The Trust Board is the admission authority, and the policy is centrally composed & Local Governing Body are required to accept this policy. Support for School Admissions and Appeals is provided by the Diocese.

Capital Projects

- Large-scale capital projects are funded through School Condition Allocation (an allowance managed by the Diocese on behalf of the Trust) rather than through an annual application process into the DfE. This is subject to change as the DfE changes the funding process, so should the Trust no longer be included in the SCA funding managed by the Diocese the Trust will either apply directly for SCA funding or apply to the Condition Improvement Fund.
- Devolved Formula Capital continues to be managed by the Local Governing Body but is required to be authorised through the approved purchasing limit guidelines. LGBs are the experts on what is required for their schools and can advise on prioritisation and organise tenders, but the Trust signs off on the proposal and has control over the release of funds.

Centralised IT Purchasing

- The Trust has a Trust wide contract for the following services that are not included in the service charge and are recharged to the schools at cost:
- Broadband, Communications & Internet Based Telephony (VoIP) – includes filtering, cyber security, safeguarding software & alerts, anti-virus software
- Managed Service Provider – supporting the schools IT requirements, assisting in purchasing IT equipment, maintaining the schools intranet, ensuring licences are compliant and that all patches and upgrades for software are completed
- MIS – Bromcom is the MIS of choice for the Trust and this includes assessment tracking, parent email, parent pay services



Why join the ODBST Team?

As an employee of the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust you will work with inspirational colleagues who are focused on delivering a broad, enriched and exciting curriculum, coupled with a shared zest for life and learning. We are an inclusive employer that embraces diversity and encourages everyone to discover and grow their talents to be the best they can be.

Training Opportunities

To support your development, we offer a highly regarded Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme which includes training and network meetings to support governors, leaders, teachers and support staff across our Trust. We hold an annual ODBST conference for senior leaders and work with our sister Trust, the ODST, for an annual conference with them also. In addition, as a member of staff you will have access to online training that covers areas such as Health and Safety and Data Protection.

Our CPD programme is constantly evolving based on feedback received, with new events being added all the time.

Career Development

We have established an “Aspirant Leaders” programme for those aiming to be our school leaders of tomorrow. The programme is facilitated by experienced leaders and provides a forum to explore the types of topics and scenarios that senior leaders face on a daily basis.

As a growing Multi-Academy Trust, we have an increasing number of opportunities for staff to grow and experience different school settings as they progress their career, whilst remaining within the ODBST family.

Health and Well-being

The health and well-being of our staff is of paramount importance to us, and we are committed to a healthy work life balance for our employees. To demonstrate our commitment, we are proud to have signed up to the Department for Education’s Staff Well-being Charter and established a well-being ambassador group with the primary aim of enhancing staff well-being across the trust. We have open channels of communication to ensure our employees know where to turn for support. We encourage well-being suggestions from our staff and ensure all ideas are listened to and considered.

We have a monthly well-being newsletter for staff and an Employee Assistance Programme in place which offers staff a 24-hour confidential telephone line with support on a range of different topics, including health, bereavement and finances. In addition, we provide access to a wellbeing app and web portal where employees can access a range of resources, such as a mood tracker, mini health checks and healthy eating advice.



Pension Scheme

As an ODBST employee you will have access to either the Local Government Pension Scheme if you are a member of our Support Staff or the Teachers Pension Scheme if you are a Teacher. You don't pay tax or national insurance on your contributions and the ODBST adds a generous employer contribution. All staff are entitled to opt-out of the pension scheme should they wish to do so.



Selection Process

Guidance for Applicants

These notes are intended to help you make the best application possible, which should be done using the ODBST application form and submitted with the recruitment monitoring form, both available at: [Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust - As a staff member \(odbst.org.uk\)](https://www.odbst.org.uk)

The information you provide will help us understand how you meet the requirements of the role and so helps us to short-list candidates for interview. Our shortlisting decisions are based solely on the information you supply in your application so that we can ensure fairness.

Please refer to the job description, person specification and our vision and values. It helps us if you can relate your knowledge, skills and experience to the points in the person specification.

You must include your complete work history in your application, including any times where you were not working and the reasons for this.

Safeguarding

The Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust provides a safe and secure environment for pupils to learn. The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and operates a strict Safeguarding Policy, with procedures being rigorously and consistently applied. All applicants will be required to demonstrate a commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.

DBS Checks

In line with our safeguarding and child protection policy, all employees and volunteers working in specific roles at the ODBST will be subject to satisfactory clearance being obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service. The check will be undertaken as part of the appointment process with the successful candidate.

Equal Opportunities

The ODBST is a fair employer promoting equal opportunities, which do not disadvantage any person on the grounds of a protected characteristic. We are committed to providing clear and transparent guidelines and complying with our legal obligations under the Equality Act (2010).

We will use the information provided by you on the Recruitment Monitoring Form to monitor our equal opportunities policy and practices. This part of the form will be separated from the main application form and will not be taken into account in the selection process.



Background Checks

Applicants are asked to provide the name and contact details of two referees on their application form. References will normally be taken up for short-listed candidates prior to interview. If you do not wish us to contact your current employer before interview, please indicate this clearly on your form. Any offer of employment is subject to receipt of at least two satisfactory references.

We are required to check that anyone taking up employment with us has the legal right to work in the UK. Short-listed applicants will normally be asked to provide documentary evidence to support their entitlement to work in the UK prior to any offer of employment being made.

In addition, the successful candidate will be asked to complete a range of safer recruitment checks including a health assessment; proof of qualifications and professional memberships; identity and address checks and if the role requires, a driving checks.

Data Protection

The information you provide as part of your application will be used in the recruitment process. We will hold your data securely with access restricted to those involved in dealing with your application and in the recruitment process. Once this process is completed the data relating to unsuccessful applicants will be destroyed after six months. If you are the successful candidate, your application form will be retained and form the basis of your personnel record.

Full details are available in our privacy notice for job applicants, which is available here:

[ODBST Job Applicant Privacy Notice](#)

Applications and Closing Date

Applications should be made using the ODBST application form provided on the ODBST website: [Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust - As a staff member \(odbst.org.uk\)](#)

Applicants should also complete and submit the recruitment monitoring form:

[ODBST Recruitment Monitoring form](#)

Your completed application should be emailed to: hr@odbst.org by the closing date detailed on the advert.

Thank you for your interest in the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust.

