



Our Community Multi Academy Trust
Policy owners: Executive Headteacher and Head of School
Review: Annually following approval

Lydd Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Approval date: 16th October 2026 Approved by: LMC

Ethos & Values:

Across all of the schools within the Trust, we endeavour to provide the nurturing and caring environment essential to the inspiration and success of all members of the school's community. At Lydd Primary School, our values and practice promote kindness, respect, inclusion and the dignity of every member of our community.

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner if legislation, guidance or safeguarding concerns require a change.

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1.0 Policy objectives:

This policy sets out how Lydd Primary School, part of Our Community Multi Academy Trust (OCMAT), prevents and responds to bullying. It applies across our nursery and primary provision, including Reception, and to school activities, visits and clubs. It covers bullying in person and online, including incidents outside school that affect pupils or the school community.

The school will involve pupils, parents, carers and staff in reviewing this policy and its implementation.

The Trust is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

2.0 Links with other school policies and practices

This policy must be read alongside the following relevant school and Trust policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy, including suspension, permanent exclusion, searching and confiscation procedures
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including child-on-child abuse and allegations about adults
- Online safety and acceptable-use procedures
- PSHE and Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy
- SEND and equality arrangements, including the Accessibility Plan
- Data Protection Policy and records-retention arrangements
- Complaints, staff grievance, disciplinary and whistleblowing procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct and positive-handling procedures

3.0 Links to legislation and guidance

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Schedule, paragraph 10: the academy proprietor must ensure that bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable through an effective anti-bullying strategy. Relevant behaviour and search powers are addressed in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Education Act 1996, as amended, including by the Education Act 2011.
- The Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989; Children Act 2004; and Children and Families Act 2014 (relevant safeguarding and SEND duties).
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988 (remaining provisions) and Online Safety Act 2023 (including relevant communications offences).
- Public Order Act 1986

This policy is informed by Keeping children safe in education 2026; Working together to safeguard children 2026; the current EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers; DfE Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017); Searching, screening and confiscation; current statutory suspension and permanent exclusion guidance (effective 26 July 2026); the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015); and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (updated March 2024). Records and information-sharing must comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, as amended, and relevant ICO guidance. Official sources are listed in section 13.

4.0 Responsibilities

Responsibilities are allocated as follows:

- The Executive Headteacher has overall school leadership accountability. The Head of School coordinates day-to-day implementation, oversees responses and follow-up, and ensures pupils, parents and staff know how to report concerns. Decisions must follow the Trust's current scheme of delegation. Only the headteacher, including an acting headteacher where applicable, may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil; the statutory decision-maker must be clear under the school's leadership arrangements.
- The Local Monitoring Committee (LMC) monitors implementation and outcomes and reports to the Trust under its scheme of delegation. The Trust Board retains overall accountability. Approval must follow the Trust's policy-approval arrangements.
- All staff, including nursery, teaching, support, lunchtime and club staff, must recognise, respond to, record and report concerns. Governors and volunteers must pass concerns to the appropriate school leader and follow safeguarding procedures. The DSL leads safeguarding assessment, referrals and protective planning, with support from deputy DSLs. The SENCO advises on needs, accessible communication and reasonable adjustments.
- Parents and carers should report concerns promptly, support their children and work with the school. They should not confront another child or family or post identifying details of incidents online.
- Pupils are helped, in ways appropriate to their age and needs, to treat others respectfully and tell a trusted adult if they experience or witness bullying. Responsibility for protecting children rests with adults.

Children can tell their class teacher, nursery key person or any trusted adult. Parents and carers should contact the class teacher, nursery team or school office (01797 320362) and ask for the Head of School if further support is needed. Safeguarding concerns must be passed immediately to the DSL or a deputy; current contacts are published on the school safeguarding webpage and displayed in school. If the DSL and deputies are unavailable, staff must not delay protective action or referral. Call 999 in an emergency. Concerns about the school's response follow the Complaints Policy and its alternative route where the complaint concerns a school leader.

5.0 Definition of bullying

Bullying is intentional behaviour by an individual or group that repeatedly causes physical or emotional harm. It commonly involves an imbalance of power, including physical strength, social influence or access to harmful information. A single incident of harm, harassment or abuse must still be addressed promptly; staff must not wait for repetition before taking safeguarding action. This definition reflects DfE guidance Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017).

In nursery and Reception, and for children with SEND, staff consider developmental stage, communication, understanding and patterns of behaviour before describing an incident as bullying. Friendship difficulties, impulsive behaviour or difficulty regulating emotions may need a different response, but harm is always addressed. Staff protect those affected, teach safer behaviour, involve parents and seek SENCO or DSL advice where needed. Children are not labelled as 'bullies'. Ordinary disagreements do not automatically constitute bullying.

Online harm can spread through a single post, repeated sharing or continued access. Staff must respond to the impact without waiting for a second post. Bullying or harassment of adults can

involve a one-off serious incident as well as repeated behaviour; staff concerns follow the Trust's employment procedures.

Bullying can include (but is not limited to) name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

Online or cyberbullying includes abusive messages, exclusion from online groups, harmful sharing of images or videos, impersonation and manipulated or AI-generated material. It may occur through games, messaging, websites, apps or social media. The safeguarding response must address the harm caused, including where an image is fake.

Bullying between children is a form of child-on-child abuse. It can cause serious emotional harm and affect children's development. Sexual violence, sexual harassment and other abuse must be addressed through safeguarding procedures even where they do not meet the definition of repeated bullying.

6.0 Forms and types of bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
- Prejudice-related bullying, including bullying connected with protected characteristics:
- Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
- Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
- Bullying related to disability or special educational needs; SEN itself is not a separate protected characteristic
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/bi-phobic bullying)
- Bullying related to sex or gender reassignment, including sexist and transphobic bullying
- Bullying related to pregnancy or maternity, or to a person's family circumstances

Equality and protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Act's school-pupil provisions cover disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation; age and marriage/civil partnership are not covered by those provisions, although relevant employment protections apply.

Lydd will challenge bullying connected with any of these characteristics, including a perceived characteristic or association with another person, such as a family member. This policy protection applies whether or not the person actually has that characteristic. Racist, disablist, sexist,

homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language or behaviour must not be dismissed as jokes or banter.

The school will have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. Disabled pupils must receive reasonable adjustments; support must also reflect individual SEND and communication needs. Children must not be disadvantaged for reporting discrimination, supporting another person's complaint or raising a concern in good faith.

Prejudice-related incidents, including one-off incidents, must be recorded and addressed promptly. Records should identify the nature of the prejudice, action and follow-up without unnecessary sensitive personal data. The Head of School and DSL will review patterns and provide anonymised information to the LMC so that prevention and support can be improved.

7.0 Trust ethos

Our Community Multi Academy Trust (the Trust) recognises that bullying can have a devastating effect on individuals, create a barrier to learning and seriously affect mental wellbeing.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our schools can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Our Community:

- Monitors and reviews our Anti-Bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the Anti-Bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the Anti-Bullying policy.
- Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- Will deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

8.0 Responding to bullying

The school will take the following actions in response to suspected or reported bullying, adapting the response to the circumstances and any safeguarding risks:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- A member of the leadership team will establish the facts through separate, sensitive discussions with those involved. Where abuse or a possible offence is suspected, the DSL will assess the concern and coordinate referrals. Staff must not conduct an investigation that could prejudice a police or children's social care investigation, or require children to confront one another.
- Staff must inform the DSL without delay where bullying raises safeguarding concerns. The DSL will assess risk, arrange protection and support, and refer to children's social care or the police where appropriate, following the Child Protection Policy and Keeping children safe in education. Sexual violence and sexual harassment must be addressed under Part Five of that guidance. Immediate danger requires emergency action; any member of staff may make a safeguarding referral and must inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- Parents and carers will be informed of concerns and appropriate action, unless doing so could increase risk or prejudice a safeguarding investigation. Information will be shared only with those who need it; staff must not promise confidentiality or disclose another child's personal information or sanctions unnecessarily.
- Authorised staff will decide appropriate sanctions and support under the Behaviour Policy. The views of those affected will be considered, but action does not depend on agreement from all parties. Disability-related needs and reasonable adjustments must be considered. Restorative work must be voluntary, safe and appropriate, and must not replace safeguarding action.
- The DSL will consider community-based early help, targeted family help, children's social care and police involvement according to need and risk, following current Kent safeguarding procedures. Staff must not wait for proof of an offence before seeking advice or making a referral. A child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm requires immediate referral to children's social care and, where appropriate, the police.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.
- Staff must record concerns promptly through the school's agreed behaviour-recording arrangements and inform the Head of School. Safeguarding concerns must be recorded on MyConcern and communicated directly to the DSL or a deputy without delay; entering a record alone is not an urgent referral. Records must include dates, those involved, any prejudice-related factors, assessment of risk, actions, decisions and reasons, referrals and follow-up outcomes. Access and retention must follow Trust data-protection and retention arrangements.

Necessary, proportionate information may be shared lawfully to protect a child; consent is not invariably required and data protection must not delay safeguarding.

The responsible leader will agree and record a follow-up date with those affected, check that the bullying has stopped and review support and protection. Initial follow-up should normally occur within five school days of the agreed action, sooner where risk requires, with further checks until the concern is resolved. Continuing or repeated harm must be escalated to the Head of School, Executive Headteacher and DSL as appropriate. This is the school's response standard, not a statutory deadline.

Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Preserve ordinary bullying messages or other non-sexual evidence where safe to do so. Children, parents and staff must not copy, screenshot, save or forward nude or semi-nude images of children. Report these immediately to the DSL, who will follow UKCIS guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes. Staff must not intentionally view such imagery except where the DSL determines that a permitted exceptional reason applies. These safeguards also apply to manipulated or AI-generated sexual imagery depicting children.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems;
 - Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
 - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
 - Only appropriately authorised staff may search or confiscate electronic devices, following the Behaviour Policy and current DfE Searching, screening and confiscation guidance. Concerns involving nude or semi-nude imagery must be referred to the DSL before any viewing or deletion decision.
 - Removal or deletion of content must be coordinated with the DSL where safeguarding concerns arise. Before deleting possible evidence of an offence, seek police advice where appropriate. Decisions about nude or semi-nude imagery must follow UKCIS guidance, including recording the reasons for any search, viewing or deletion.
- Apply proportionate action under the Behaviour Policy, considering age, needs and the circumstances. Support the child responsible to change their behaviour and provide any additional help needed. Safeguarding and protective action must not depend on a disciplinary sanction being imposed.
- Seek police advice or make a referral where a criminal offence is suspected, taking immediate action where anyone is at risk.

- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
 - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Supporting pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Helping the pupil to report concerns and understand safe responses, including the evidence safeguards above. The pupil is not responsible for stopping the bullying.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing pastoral support, involving parents and carers where safe, and considering referral for specialist or therapeutic support where appropriate and available.
- Where needed, coordinating help with the SENCO, DSL and parents through local family-help services, children's social care or appropriate children's mental health services.

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- For online incidents, following the evidence-preservation and content-removal safeguards in the cyberbullying section.
- Applying proportionate sanctions under the Behaviour Policy, which may include warnings, removal from class, loss of privileges, suspension or permanent exclusion where the relevant legal conditions are met. Suspension and permanent exclusion decisions and procedures are governed by the Behaviour Policy and current DfE statutory guidance; they must not be used automatically.
- Where necessary, seeking support from local family-help services, children's social care, children's mental health services or the police, according to the concern and assessed risk.

Supporting adults

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.

Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Adults may report concerns to the Head of School or Executive Headteacher. Concerns about the Head of School should be referred to the Executive Headteacher; concerns about the Executive Headteacher follow the alternative Trust route in the applicable complaints, HR or safeguarding procedure. Staff concerns follow Trust grievance and HR procedures; parent concerns follow the

Complaints Policy. Allegations that an adult may have harmed a child must follow safeguarding and local authority designated officer (LADO) procedures. Legitimate complaints and protected disclosures must not be treated as bullying merely because they challenge the school.

- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the Trust Code of Conduct.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Responding to allegations about adults

- Establish the concern fairly through the appropriate Trust procedure, providing support and an opportunity for those involved to respond. Safeguarding or police enquiries take priority where applicable.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Taking proportionate action through the appropriate Trust HR, disciplinary or complaints procedure, with fair process. Police advice or legal action may be sought where justified.

9.0 Preventing bullying

Environment

The school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying may affect any member of the community and that bullying between children is child-on-child abuse.
- Recognise that children with special educational needs and disabilities may be disproportionately affected by bullying. Provide appropriate pastoral support, accessible reporting and reasonable adjustments, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice.
- Discuss differences respectfully and in age-appropriate ways, including family circumstances, care experience, caring responsibilities, race, religion or belief, disability, sex, sexual orientation and appearance. Avoid stereotypes and protect children's privacy.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Teach safe, age-appropriate use of technology, including online games, messaging and reporting tools. Lessons must not encourage children to create accounts on services for which they are below the minimum age.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.

- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Policy and Support

The school community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action under school policies for bullying brought to the school's attention that involves or affects pupils, including incidents off site, on school transport or online.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use appropriate approaches to address harm and change behaviour. Restorative discussions must be voluntary and must never expose a child to further harm or replace a safeguarding response.

Education and Training

The school community will:

- Provide induction and regular safeguarding and anti-bullying training for all staff, including nursery, lunchtime, support and club staff. Training must cover prejudice-related incidents, SEND, child-on-child abuse, online harm, reporting and recording.
- Teach prevention through Jigsaw PSHE, including Celebrating Difference and Relationships, alongside assemblies, stories, discussion and everyday modelling. Learning must reflect pupils' age, stage and needs; nursery and Reception teaching focuses on kindness, emotions, friendship, safe behaviour and seeking adult help. The PSHE and RSHE Policy sets out the wider curriculum.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

10.0 Involvement of pupils

We will:

- Involve pupils in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- Regularly canvass pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying. Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.

- Involve pupils in age-appropriate anti-bullying activities and reinforce messages throughout the curriculum.
- Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil-led education and support
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

11.0 Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

We will:

- Involve parents and carers in developing and reviewing policies and procedures, and explain that the school does not tolerate bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

12.0 Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

- The Head of School and DSL will review bullying and prejudice-related records, follow-up outcomes and patterns, including the experiences of pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups. The LMC will receive an anonymised summary at least annually, and sooner where significant concerns arise, to review effectiveness and required actions.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- The Head of School will maintain oversight of day-to-day responses and follow-up, reporting significant or unresolved concerns to the Executive Headteacher. The DSL will oversee safeguarding risks and referrals.
- The LMC will report significant concerns and monitoring outcomes to the Trust through its agreed arrangements. This policy will be reviewed annually and earlier following material changes in guidance, safeguarding concerns or evidence that procedures are ineffective.

13.0 Useful links and supporting organisations

Statutory guidance and official advice

Keeping children safe in education 2026: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Working together to safeguard children 2026:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

DfE Preventing and tackling bullying: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-bullying>

Equality Act 2010 advice for schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Searching screening and confiscation: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

School suspensions and permanent exclusions:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-suspensions-and-permanent-exclusions>

UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

DfE Preventing bullying and harassment of school staff:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying-and-harassment-of-school-staff>

ICO Sharing information to safeguard children: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/data-sharing/a-10-step-guide-to-sharing-information-to-safeguard-children/>

Local reporting and practical support

Lydd safeguarding contacts: <https://www.lyddprimary.org.uk/Safeguarding/>

Kent safeguarding reporting and referrals: <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/guidance/worried-about-a-child>

Anti-Bullying Alliance resources: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Childline advice and support: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

NSPCC advice and support: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Childnet online safety resources: <https://www.childnet.com/>

Jigsaw PSHE 3 to 11: <https://jigsaweducationgroup.com/programmes/pshe-3-11/>

References checked: 9 October 2026. The policy must be used alongside current statutory guidance and Trust procedures. Approval and implementation remain subject to the Trust's scheme of delegation.