



Whitburn Church of England Academy

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy

Preface

The Academy Vision and Values can be found here: <https://www.whitburncofeacademy.org/about-us/academy-ethos.html>

This policy and its associated procedures are based on these key principles and values.

Introduction

Whitburn Church of England Academy is committed to providing a secure environment for students, where learners feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at Whitburn Church of England Academy recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for learners or not.

In adhering to this policy, and the procedures therein, staff and visitors will contribute to Whitburn Church of England Academy's delivery of the outcomes to all learners, as set out in section 10 (2) of the Children's Act 2004¹. This Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy is one element within our overall arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all learners in line with our statutory duties set out at section 175 of the Education Act 2002.

Our school's Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy also draws upon the guidance contained in the DfE publication "Keeping Children safe in Education, (Updated 2023)", and specifically DCSF Resources "Learning Together to be Safe, "Prevent: Resources Guide", "Tackling Extremism in the UK", DfE's "Teaching Approaches that help build resilience to Extremism among Young People" and Peter Clarke's Report of July 2014.

¹ *the physical mental health and emotional well-being of children; the protection of children from harm and neglect; the education, training and recreation of children; the contribution made by them to society; and their social and economic well-being.*

Objectives

The Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy is intended to provide a framework for dealing with issues relating to vulnerability, radicalisation and exposure to extreme views. We recognise that we are well placed to be able to identify safeguarding issues and this policy clearly sets out how the school will deal with such incidents and identifies how the curriculum and ethos underpins our actions.

The objectives are that:

- All Directors, teachers and support staff will understand what radicalisation and extremism is and why we need to be vigilant in school.
- All Directors, teachers and support staff are familiar with the school policy on tackling extremism and radicalisation, and will follow the policy guidance swiftly when issues arise.
- All students will understand the dangers of radicalisation and exposure to extremist views; building resilience against these and knowing what to do if they experience them.
- All parents/carers and students will know that the school has policies in place to keep students safe from harm and that the school regularly reviews its systems to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

Ethos and Practice

When operating this policy Whitburn Church of England Academy uses the following accepted Governmental definition of extremism which is:

‘Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members in our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas’.

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources or external sources. Our students see our school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens.

As a school we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for students and can make young people susceptible to radicalisation and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this policy. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our students.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of young people. Education is a powerful weapon against this; equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking to challenge and debate in an informed way.

Therefore, at Whitburn Church of England Academy we will provide a broad and balanced curriculum so that our students are enriched, knowledgeable and become tolerant of difference and diversity. We will also ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.

Furthermore, at Whitburn Church of England Academy we are aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age. These views emanate from a variety of sources and media, including via the internet and at times students may themselves reflect or display views that may be discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language. As part of our whole school e-safety programme we highlight the potential risks students may face in relation to on-line radicalisation and encourage students to report any concerns they may have for themselves or others.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by students or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy and existing disciplinary procedures for staff.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities, staff will be alert to:

- Disclosures by students of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school such as in their homes or community groups, especially where students have not actively sought these out
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Students accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Distributing extremist literature and documentation
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Partner schools, local authority services and police reports of issues affecting students in other schools or settings
- Students voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line within our Single Equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views

We recognise that students in susceptible social and domestic situations (mental health issues, single parent families, involvement in gangs) may be at greater risk of radicalisation than other students. Through our usual safeguarding procedure, information is shared on targeted students and appropriate external support accessed as necessary.

In conclusion we will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority and criteria for safeguarding individuals susceptible to extremism and radicalisation.

Ethos and Approach

We strive to eradicate the myths and assumptions that can lead to some young people becoming alienated and disempowered, especially where the narrow approaches learners may experience elsewhere may make it harder for them to challenge or question these radical influences. This guidance and support will be delivered primarily through our PSHE programme but will be reinforced across the school curriculum, most particularly in the Humanities subjects. We will ensure that all of our support and approaches will help our students build resilience to extremism and give them a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. We will develop strategies and staff training to ensure that all our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it.

We will be flexible enough to adapt our teaching approaches, as appropriate and address specific issues so as to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation. We will facilitate the following principles:

- Making a connection with young people through positive engagement and a student-centred approach.
- Facilitating a 'safe space' for dialogue to ensure students feel safe and comfortable talking about their feelings and views on a wide range of social, political, religious and cultural issues.
- Equipping our students with the appropriate skills, knowledge, understanding and awareness for resilience.

Therefore, this approach will be embedded within the ethos of our school so that students know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation. This will work in conjunction with our schools' approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. We recognise the importance of guiding students to be intolerant of all forms of extremism, e.g. – violent animal rights extremism, political extremism.

Our goal is to build mutual respect and understanding and to promote the use of dialogue not violence as a form of conflict resolution. We will achieve this by using an approach that includes:

- RSHE Programmes
- Open discussion and debate
- Work on anti-violence and a restorative approach to conflict resolution
- Targeted programmes led by external providers where required
- Cross-curricular thematic programmes such as collapsed timetable days
- Monitoring of curriculum and RSHE provision to ensure the values of democracy and individual liberty are promoted throughout the wider curriculum

We will also work with local partners, families and communities in our effort to ensure our school understands and embraces our local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our students' experiences and horizons. We will help support students who may be susceptible to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a learner is offered mentoring.

Additionally, in such instances our school will seek external support from local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

At Whitburn Church of England Academy, we will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We will teach and encourage students to respect one another, and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith. It is indeed our most fundamental responsibility to keep our students safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and global society.

Therefore, by delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, PSHE and tutorial programme, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, we will strive to ensure our students recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also help students develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

Use of External Agencies and Speakers

At Whitburn Church of England Academy, we encourage the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our students. We will positively vet external agencies, individuals or speakers who engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences for our students. Such vetting is to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages or that we are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the school's values and ethos. We must be aware that in some instances the work of external agencies may not directly be connected with the rest of the school curriculum so we need to ensure that this work is of benefit to students.

Our school will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- Any messages communicated to students are consistent with the ethos of the school and do not marginalise any communities, groups or individuals
- Any messages do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism or seek to radicalise students through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies
- Activities are matched to the needs of students
- Activities are carefully evaluated by the school to ensure that they are effective

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school is to encourage learners to understand opposing views and ideologies, appropriate to their age, understanding and abilities, and to be able to actively engage with them in informed debate, and we may use external agencies or speakers to facilitate and support this.

Safeguarding

Please refer to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for the full procedural framework on our Safeguarding duties. The school follows the guidance outlined by the South Tyneside Safeguarding Board.

We recognise the importance of being constantly vigilant and remaining fully informed about the issues which affect the local area, region and society in which we teach. Staff are reminded to suspend any ‘professional disbelief’ that instances of radicalisation ‘could not happen here’ and to be ‘professionally inquisitive’ where concerns arise, referring any concerns through the appropriate channels.

Staff at Whitburn Church of England Academy will be alert to the fact that whilst Extremism and Radicalisation is broadly a safeguarding issue there may be some instances where a child or students may be at direct risk of harm or neglect. For example; this could be due to a student displaying risky behaviours in terms of the activities they are involved in or the groups they are associated with or staff be aware of information about a student’s family that may be equally place a young person at risk of harm. (These examples are for illustration and are not definitive or exhaustive).

Therefore, all adults working in Whitburn Church of England Academy (including visiting staff, volunteers’ contractors, and students on placement) are required to report instances where they believe a young person may be at risk of harm, linked to radicalisation, to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (SMT, Head of Sixth Form and Excellence and Inclusion Manager). The DSL will follow up these concerns by following the South Tyneside Local Authority referral flowchart shown in Appendix 1. The school will only notify parents of these concerns if this course of action is approved by the external agencies to which the DSL refers the concern.

As with any child protection referral, staff are made aware of their right to refer a concern to the appropriate external agency if they are concerned the DSL has decided not to refer a concern to the South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board. Referrals can be made to the South Tyneside Safeguarding Board as outlined in the Child Protection policy.

We will actively support any multi-agency interventions in any support deemed necessary. For example, we will organise anger management support if advised and allow students to attend mentoring sessions in school time or support any family-based counselling interventions. We are also committed to working with relevant external agencies to provide support for students who may have had family members arrested for suspected terrorist activities.

Training

Whole school training on Safeguarding will be organised for staff and Directors on an annual basis. The annual training will provide specific guidance on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will attend training courses as necessary and the appropriate inter- agency training organised by the Local Authority at least every two years. Again, this will include training on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications.

Information is provided to staff as part of our safeguarding training programme (PREVENT) to allow staff to identify possible changes in young people's behaviour that may suggest they have become influenced by extremist ideology. This may include changing their style of dress, particularly in the sixth form, loss of contact with traditional groups of friends, using insulting or derogatory language to describe groups opposed by extremists or evidence the student may have recently joined a gang in the local community. Annual staff training is delivered by the PREVENT (Safer Vision Team).

Staff training will also provide staff with information on factors that may make young people want to be radicalised, e.g. – status, identity, sense of belonging, neglect in the family, re-dress some form of injustice, excitement, adventure, political motivation, moral motivation, family / other friends involved in extremist activities. Training will also focus significantly on the possible impact of extremist views on the young person once they have been radicalised, e.g. – over-identification so that extremist views become the norm, development of an 'us and them' thinking and dehumanising the perceived enemy.

Annual safeguarding training reinforces the message that staff should never attempt to impose their political or religious views and beliefs on students under any circumstances. The school will use appropriate systems to deal with any member of staff trying to use their position of trust to influence the views of young people at Whitburn.

Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting all staff and volunteers, to our school will follow national guidance for safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checks and that we complete and maintain a single central record of such vetting checks. We will apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general in doing so will deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement.

We will be alert to the possibility that persons may seek to gain positions within our school so as to unduly influence our schools' character and ethos. We are aware that such persons seek to limit the opportunities for our students thereby rendering them susceptible to extremist views and radicalisation as a consequence.

Therefore, by adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an on-going culture of vigilance within our school, we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

Role of Governing Body

The Governing Body will undertake appropriate training to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibilities as Directors, including their statutory safeguarding duties. The Governing Body will support the ethos and values of our school and will support the school in tackling extremism and radicalisation.

In line with the provisions set out in the DfE guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023’ the governing body will challenge the school’s senior management team on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness.

Directors will review this policy annually and may amend and adopt it outside of this timeframe in accordance with any new legislation or guidance or in response to any quality assurance recommendations pertaining to the delivery of this policy and the overall safeguarding arrangements made.

Policy, Adoption, Monitoring and Review

This policy was considered and adopted by the Governing body in line with their overall duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of students as set out in the DfE guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023’. Parents will be issued with a hard copy of this policy on request.

In Whitburn Church of England Academy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will actively evaluate the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring the staff group’s understanding and application of the procedures within this policy as their overall duty to safeguard students. The policy, in line with updated DfE and Local Authority guidance, will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy		
Linked to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection and Safeguarding policy • Equal Opportunity Policy • Anti-bullying Policy • E-Safety Policy 		
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28 th April 2015	1.0	Approved by the Governing Body
Revision Date		
24 th April 2018	2.0	Approved by the Governing Body
23 rd March 2021	3.0	Approved by the Governing Body
23 rd March 2022	4.0	Approved by the Governing Body
16 th May 2023	5.0	Approved by the Governing Body
19 th March 2024	6.0	Approved by the Governing Body

Sharing a Prevent Safeguarding Concern in South Tyneside

