



## Prevent Duty Policy 2024-25

### **1.0 Statement of Intent**

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of all our wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g., criminal exploitation, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

As with all safeguarding, we consider this to be everyone's business, and we have the mindset "It could happen here"

### **2.0 Definitions**

**Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

**Extremism** 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. Included in the definition of extremism are calls for the death of members of the armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations.

**Terrorism** is defined as violent threats or actions designed to influence government or intimidate the public with the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause. This includes endangering or causing serious violence to a person or people, serious damage to property, and seriously interfering or disrupting an electronic system.

### **3.0 Approach to building resilience to radicalisation and extremism**

There is no place for extremist views of any kind at The Acorns School, whether from internal sources –students, staff, management committee members or external sources - community, external agencies, or individuals. We are committed to making sure our school is a safe place where students can discuss and explore controversial issues safely and in an unbiased way and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this. 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. We view education as a powerful weapon against this, equipping students with skills of critical thinking and an understanding and tolerance of difference and diversity. We challenge any extremist views, prejudice, derogatory language, and discrimination.

Through our curriculum and our key-working with students we will promote the British 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. We have a duty to keep our students safe and prepare them for life in modern multicultural Britain and globally.

We screen visitors and external speakers to ensure their message is consistent with British values and staff are always present during these talks or workshops. We work with key agencies such as the police, Lancashire Child and Youth Justice Services, Prevent Education, Shout Out UK and Children and Family Wellbeing Services to help build resilience and decrease vulnerability.

### **4.0 Risk Reduction**

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Lead Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. This will be reviewed annually with the management committee and with the safeguarding member of the management committee

#### **ICT**

The statutory guidance makes clear the need for schools to ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. We ensure that suitable filtering and monitoring is in place.

## **Training**

In addition to annual safeguarding training, staff will undergo annual PREVENT training to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to recognise and refer any concerns appropriately. As a school we will link and take advice from the Local Authority Prevent Lead Co-ordinator.

Students may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff can recognise those vulnerabilities.

## **5.0 Vulnerability**

### **Indicators of vulnerability include:**

- Identity Crisis – the student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- Personal Crisis – the student may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal Circumstances – migration, local community tensions and events affecting the student's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- Unmet Aspirations – the student may have perceptions of injustice, a feeling of failure
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups
- Special Educational Need – students may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

This list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

### **More critical risk factors could include:**

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

It is vital that staff are also alert to **other indicators** including:

- Graffiti, symbols, art-work or writing that promotes extremist messages or organisations
- Parental reports or concerns of changes in behaviour, friendship groups or actions
- Students voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideology
- Use of hate terms
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not limited to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture

### **6.0 concerns**

#### **What happens if there is a concern?**

Referral for any issue concerning potential radicalisation to extremism should be managed as any other safeguarding referral. All adults working at The Acorns School are required to report instances where they believe a child may be at risk of harm or neglect. If they have concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism they should speak with the Prevent Lead and Single Point of Contact (SPOC.) Joanne Hodson, Headteacher.

## **Making a referral**

In accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, if any member of staff has any concerns about a pupil, they will raise this with the DSL. Parents will be contacted to discuss the issue, unless doing so would put the pupil at further risk of harm. A decision will be made at this meeting to determine whether a referral should be made to Prevent. In most cases, the DSL will refer the case to Prevent where there is a radicalisation concern, as appropriate.

Any staff members may make referrals using the Prevent national referral form if they deem it necessary or use the Lancashire procedures. The DSL will be notified in all cases and will support staff members who do so.

Following a referral made to Prevent, a Channel panel will meet to discuss the referral, assess the risk and decide whether the person should be accepted into Channel. The panel will be chaired by the LA and attended by multi-agency partners including the police, education professionals, health services, housing and social services. Staff members will be notified if they are required to attend a Channel panel following a referral made to Prevent.

The DSL will follow up any referrals and the pupil will be monitored for a period of time to determine whether there have been any changes in behaviour. Parents will be consulted during this period, unless doing so would put the pupil at further risk of harm. If any concerns are raised, the DSL will contact the Channel programme to discuss further steps. The DSL will record and retain all incidents for school records in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR, as outlined in the Data Protection Policy.

**The police will be notified immediately if someone is about to put themselves or others in immediate danger, or if they appear to be involved in planning to carry out a criminal offence and the school's emergency procedures will be followed.**

**J Hodson**

**March 2025**

**To be reviewed in March 2026**