



Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy



The
Birkenhead Park
School

Adopted by LGB: September 2019
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Person responsible for policy: Clerk

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy

From 1 July 2015 all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

This policy is one element within our overall school arrangements to safeguard students and should be read alongside the most current versions of ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ and ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People’. The policy also reflects guidance from the Wirral Children Safeguarding Partnership and our current Safeguarding Policy.

School Values and Practice

In order for The Birkenhead Park School to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of our wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

Schools can also build students’ resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that the Prevent duty is not intended to stop students debating controversial issues. On the contrary, schools should provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.

When operating this policy we use 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. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations.”

The full Government Prevent Strategy can be viewed at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

As a school we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children 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.

We therefore provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our students are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalized.

We are also aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which 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. 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 for students.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities school 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 group 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
- 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 with our equalities
- Policy views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, religion, or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others

Risk Assessment

The statutory guidance makes clear that schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area, and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. A contextual safeguarding approach is used by staff to identify students who may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, and this follows the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

Working in Partnership

The Birkenhead Park School seeks to work collaboratively with the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children following agreed local processes.

Effective engagement with parents / the family is also important as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms.

Local Contacts

The Merseyside Police contact for Wirral is Sgt Darren Taylor: Darren.F.Taylor@merseyside.police.uk

The Channel lead for the Local Authority is Kerry Mehta, Head of Safeguarding Children: kerrymehta@wirral.gov.uk

A referral into the Prevent process does not replace usual safeguarding reporting procedures which must always be used if you believe a child, young person or adult is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect.

Training

Whole school training is held annually for all staff based on the guidance outlined in the latest version of Keeping Children Safe In Education. Specific safeguarding issues such as peer-on-peer abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, and contextual safeguarding are addressed. In addition, all staff complete a further online training module focused on the Prevent Duty in more detail.

IT Policy

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 is in place.

Building children's resilience to radicalisation

Schools can build students' resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping them to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making. The Birkenhead Park School provides a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students and, within this, fundamental British values.

The Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum is an effective way of providing students with time to explore sensitive or controversial issues, and equipping them with the knowledge and skills to understand and manage difficult situations. The subject is used to teach students to recognise and manage risk, make safer choices, and recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and wellbeing. They also develop effective ways of resisting pressures, including knowing when, where and how to get help. The Birkenhead Park School encourages students to develop the school values of Positivity, Ambition, Resilience and Thoughtfulness.

Students are provided with the knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. They are equipped to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, to debate, and to make reasoned arguments. In addition, students learn about democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld. Students are also taught about the diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding.