

Preventing Extremism Policy

Introduction

Heritage School is committed to playing its part in the government's counter-terrorism strategy. The aims of Prevent (the part of the strategy affecting the work of schools) is to reduce the threat from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Act) places a duty on certain bodies ("specified authorities" listed in Schedule 6 to the Act), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

The three objectives of Prevent are:

1. to respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it,
2. to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support, and
3. to work with sectors and institutions (i.e. schools) where there may be risks of radicalisation.

Legislation and guidance

The policy is drawn up in accordance with the following statutory guidance:

- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (updated 10th April 2019),
- The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015),
- The use of social media for online radicalisation (July 2015),
- Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools (2014)
- KCSIE (September 2023).

It is linked to the following school policies:

- PSHE & Citizenship Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy
- Active Promotion of Fundamental British Values Policy
- Acceptable Use of Screens Policy

Defining extremism and radicalisation

Extremism has been defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British Values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It also includes calls for the death of armed service personnel serving at home or overseas.

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Steps Heritage School takes to prevent extremism

1. All staff are trained in Prevent Duty to understand the nature of extremism and radicalisation,
2. All staff know what signs to watch for, to identify children who may be susceptible to radicalisation .
3. All staff know what to do if they suspect extremism or radicalisation.
4. The school builds pupils' resilience to radicalisation by actively promoting Fundamental British Values and enabling them to challenge extremist views (see our Active Promotion of Fundamental British Values Policy).

5. The school actively promotes Christian values, including 'love for neighbour' and liberty of conscience, through RS lessons, assemblies and PSHE lessons.
6. The school ensures that pupils do not have access to extremist websites while at school (see our Acceptable and Safe Use of Screens Policy).
7. The school ensures that any visiting speakers will not promote extremist or radical views. Appropriate checks are undertaken on all visiting speakers - at a minimum this will include an internet search and whatever formal/informal background checks are reasonable in the circumstances. These checks are recorded on the External Speaker Checks Register. A member of school staff will be present during the visit/talk, and will monitor what is being said to ensure that it aligns with the values and ethos of the school and British values

Building children's resilience to radicalisation

In PSHE, History and R.S. lessons, as well as via assemblies, teachers provide a safe environment for exploring sensitive and controversial issues. Pupils learn to recognise and manage risk, make safe choices, and recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety. Pupils also learn about the risk of online radicalisation via social media and the Internet. They develop effective ways of resisting unwanted pressures, including when, where and how to get help.

Assessing whether a child is being radicalised

Terrorist groups need to radicalise and recruit people to their cause. Some target a few select people with the right capabilities; others aim to build a mass movement and to encourage insurgency against legitimate governments.

A mix of the following factors can lead a person to engage with extremist ideologies:

- a family culture where fundamental British values are questioned
- family tension
- quest for identity, meaning or community (belonging)
- bullying
- lack of self-esteem
- experience of hate/race crimes
- feelings of personal or political grievances
- involvement in crime
- peer pressure
- exposure to extremist sites on the Internet, including social media
- existence of mental health issues
- a desire for control or status
- a desire for excitement or adventure
- 'them and us' thinking

Further to **engagement** with extremist ideologies, an **intent to cause harm** and a **capability to use violence** are necessary in order to carry out terrorist attacks.

Intent to cause harm: not all who are drawn toward extremist ideologies come to see violence as an acceptable means, but some do. Strong group bonding, peer pressure, and indoctrination are also necessary to persuade individuals to think that violence is a legitimate response to perceived injustice.

Capability to use violence: not all who develop an intent to cause harm have the ability to carry it out, but some do. Those who do will possess the necessary skills and competencies and they will have access to funding, networks or equipment.

What to do if you suspect radicalisation

Speak in the first instance to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Jason Fletcher, Headmaster), or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Bettina Scarlata, Head of PSHE and Enrichment). They will advise whether a referral is necessary (see the Safeguarding Policy where the referral process is

explained); a specialist from Channel, the programme which supports individuals who are susceptible to radicalisation, may become involved.

If you have an urgent concern contact your local police force by dialling **101** and ask for the prevent team, or if you require urgent police assistance dial **999**. You can also call the Anti-Terrorist Hotline on **0800 789 321**, which is available 24/7 for members of the public to report suspicious activity (remember always call **999** for emergencies). Calls are answered by specially trained counter terrorism officers and staff who will carry out some initial enquiries. They are then able to pass the details on to local counter terrorism officers for further investigation where appropriate.

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