HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

PREVENT POLICY

Aspiration – Respect – Excellence

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

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PREVENT POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Online Safety
- PSHCE (incl. RSE)
- Anti-bullying and Discrimination
- Behaviour
- Equal Opportunities

Introduction

This policy forms part of our academy's commitment to keeping children safe. The main aims of this policy are to ensure that all stakeholders are vigilant for the signs of radicalisation, that they maintain a view that 'it could happen here', and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and external agencies to ensure that our students are safe from harm.

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

Extremism: 'is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas' [UK Government]. Extremism can take many forms, e.g. Islamic, left-wing, right-wing, animal rights.

The Government approach to reducing the risk of terrorism is called 'CONTEST' and has four parts to it:

Protect: to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack
Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack
Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks
Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

There are four themes within the Prevent Duty: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

The full Government Prevent Strategy can be viewed here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

DfE and Government Prevent Duty guidance can be viewed here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Strategic Prevent Lead for the academy.

Risk factors

Radicalisation can happen in person, online or through a combination of both. A person may be radicalised by others – community leaders, friends or family members, or strangers that they meet online for example – or may "self-radicalise" by watching extreme videos or reading books or sites that encourage extremist thought.[1]

There are no known definitive indicators that a young person is susceptible to radicalisation, but there are a number of signs that together increase the risk. These include:

- Identity crisis: young person is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- Personal crisis: young person may be experiencing family tensions, a sense of isolation, or low self-esteem. They may have dissociated themselves from their existing friendship group and become involved in a new and different group. They may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and/or belonging
- Personal circumstances: migration, local community tensions and events affecting the student's family's country of origin. There may be a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of government policy
- Unmet aspirations: young person may have perceptions of injustice, a feeling of failure, or rejection of civic life
- Experiences of criminality: involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment and poor resettlement or reintegration
- 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
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis

Extremist groups aim to exploit these vulnerabilities through Push and Pull factors. Push factors include: anger, frustration, perceived injustice, exclusion and dissatisfaction. Pull factors include: identity, belonging, recruitment agents, unity and brotherhood.

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[1] https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/best-practice/radicalisation-and-extremism-prevent-self-assessment-tool-safeguarding-terrorism-far-right-schools-education/

Recognising radicalisation or extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- Making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes, and networks that young people can come across online so particular individuals / groups may not become apparent)
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour, and peer relationships
- Secretive behaviour
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race, or sexuality
- Graffiti artwork or writing that displays extremist themes
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- Advocating violence towards others

Curriculum

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.

Our students have access to a comprehensive scheme of lessons and learning in which they develop resilience and awareness of extremist ideologies, for example through our PSHCE curriculum. British values are taught across the curriculum and through dedicated lessons of Religious Studies at Key Stage 3. Students may also study for GCSE Religious Studies or GCSE Citizenship at Key Stage 4. Our assembly programme supports our SMSC curriculum and promotion of British Values, as does our House system.

Students are taught how to keep themselves safe online through ICT/Computing and PSHCE curriculum. Parents/Carers knowledge, understanding and awareness of online risks are also shared via our newsletter and their free registration with National Online safety website.

We are aware that young people may 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, will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy for pupils and the Code of Conduct for staff.

Training

Through training opportunities including online access to the National Online Safety, part of the National College, as well as staff briefings in school, we will ensure our staff and Governors are fully aware of the threats, risks and vulnerabilities that are linked to radicalisation and are aware of the process of radicalisation and how this might be identified early on. This information will also form part of our annual safeguarding training.

Further resources are also available here:

- [Helping prevent terrorism and extremism](#) – Reading Borough Council
- [Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
- [Educate Against Hate](#)

Safer recruitment

We ensure our recruitment processes are rigorous, in line with statutory requirements, best practice guidance and the school's safer recruitment policy. These processes include the use of the DBS checks and online searches for all employees, governors, and regular volunteers.

Referrals

The safeguarding team should be informed as soon as possible where there are concerns or evidence of grooming, radicalisation or extremist views through the usual means – CPOMS for staff or by email for students/parents at dso@highdown.reading.sch.uk.

The safeguarding team will liaise with local authorities, including Channel Panel, for assessment. Reading Borough Council chairs a multi-agency Channel Panel which is the main decision-making and coordinating body for the Channel process in the local context. It works to identify individuals susceptible to being drawn into terrorism, partners work together to assess the risk that is presented, and provides a support plan tailored to individual needs, if appropriate.

The [National Prevent Referral Form](#).

Prevent referrals, concerns or requests for guidance can also be submitted to preventreferralsreading@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Reading's Children's Single Point of Access can also be contacted.

Where there is an immediate concern, the Police should be contacted (101, or for emergencies, 999).

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline to enable concerns relating to extremism to be raised directly (020 7340 7264) as well as by email counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Designated Safeguarding Leader will complete/update the Prevent Self-Assessment Tool launched in October 2022 on an annual basis. This will be shared with the Safeguarding Link Governor.

IT filtering and monitoring systems are in place to keep young people safe from accessing terrorist or extremist materials when accessing the internet at school. The school tests the filtering systems regularly, ensuring Terrorist content amongst others is blocked, using the SWGfL tool[2].

The Governing Body of our school will support the ethos and values of our school and will support the school in tackling extremism and radicalisation. Governors will review this policy regularly 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.

The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated through link governance, curriculum reviews and reporting safeguarding matters to the Full Governing Body.

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[2] https://testfiltering.com/