

The Willows School Academy Trust



Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

Review: September 2024

Next Review: September 2025

PREVENTING EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Legal Status:

- This policy complies with Part 2, paragraphs 5 (a) to (e) inclusive of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014), and other relevant and current regulations and any other guidance to which schools are obliged to have regard.
- In adhering to this policy, and the procedures therein, staff and visitors contribute to The Willows School delivery of the outcomes to all children, as set out in s10 (2) of the Children's Act 2004. This Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy is one element within our overall School arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of all Children in line with our statutory duties set out at s175 of the Education Act 2002.
- Our School's Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy also draws upon the guidance contained in the 'London Child Protection Procedures' and DFE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2024'; and specifically the following resources: '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.

Applies to:

- The whole school and all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours such as out of school care, afterschool clubs and all staff (teaching and support staff) working in the school.

In our school the term 'staff', in the context of safeguarding, is inclusive of all staff and is also inclusive of students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and governors.

Related Documents:

- Safeguarding Children – Safer Recruitment Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, E-Safety Policy, Whistleblowing and Behaviour Management including Discipline, Sanctions and Exclusions Policy, Personal Social Health and Economic (PSHE) education and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Education

Availability

This policy was considered and adopted by the Governors in line with the overall duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', September 2024. Parents will be issued with a hard copy of this policy on request.

Monitoring and Review:

- The Governors will review the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than September 2024, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.
- The Governors in consultation with the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead keep this policy under review and undertake an annual audit no later than one year from the date shown below. They actively evaluate the effectiveness of this policy including the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than September 2024, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Introduction

The Willows School is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils, where children and young people feel safe and are kept safe. All students at The Willows School recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for children and young people or not.

School Ethos and Practice

When operating this policy The Willows School 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 of 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 – children and young people, staff or external sources - school community, external agencies or individuals. Our children and young people 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 children and young people 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 children and young people.

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 children and young people. Education is a powerful weapon against this; equipping children and young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way. Therefore, at The Willows School we provide a broad and balanced tutorial programme, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our children and young people are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised. Furthermore at The Willows School we are aware that children and young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which emanate from the media and a variety of sources, including via the internet, and at times children and young people 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 children and young people or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Disciplinary Policy for children and young people and the Code of Behaviour for staff.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities staff are alert to:

- Disclosures by children and young people 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 children and young people have not actively sought these out;
- Packages entering The Willows School. If staff are concerned they will open said packages, record the contents and retain the package in a safe place while concerns are reported to senior management;
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images;
- children and young people 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 children and young people in other schools or settings;
- Children and young people 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, colour or culture; □ Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others and
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views.

Our school closely follows any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority and London Borough of Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children’s Board agreed processes and criteria for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation. In the event of concerns about a person becoming radicalised we will consider using the Local Authority Channel process. Channel is a bespoke panel which meets to address issues of individuals who have been identified as being at risk of radicalisation but have not committed any terrorism offence. The Channel Panel meets when a referral has been made and referrals can be made by anyone.

Teaching Approaches

We will all strive to eradicate the myths and assumptions that can lead to some children and young people becoming alienated and disempowered, especially where the narrow approaches children and young people may experience elsewhere may make it harder for them to challenge or question these radical influences. We ensure that all of our support and approaches will help our children and young people build resilience to extremism and give them a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. We develop strategies and training to ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it. We adapt our teaching approaches, as appropriate and address specific issues relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation. In doing so we follow the three broad categories of:

- making a connection with children and young people through positive engagement and a learner centred approach;
- facilitating a ‘safe space’ for dialogue and
- Equipping our children and young people with the appropriate skills, knowledge, understanding and awareness for resilience.

This approach is embedded within the ethos of our school so that children and young people know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation. This will work in conjunction with our school’s approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and young people.

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: □ Citizenship programmes.

- Open discussion and debate.
- Work on anti-violence and a restorative approach to conflict resolution.
- Targeted programmes.

We also work with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to ensure our school understands and embraces our values in challenging extremist views. We help support children and young people who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a child is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences we will ensure that that child is offered mentoring. In such instances our school will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

At The Willows School we promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We teach and encourage children and young people to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith. It is our most fundamental responsibility to keep our children and young people safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

Use of External Agencies and Speakers

At The Willows School we encourage the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our children and young people. We vet these external agencies, individuals or speakers which ensures that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages, or that are inconsistent with our school's values and ethos.

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

- Any messages communicated to children and young people 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 children and young people through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies;
- Activities are matched to the needs of children and young people and activities are carefully evaluated by schools to ensure that they are effective

We recognise that the ethos of our school is to encourage children and young people 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. By delivering a broad and balanced tutorial programme, augmented by the use of external sources, we strive to ensure our children and young people recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help children and young people develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

Whistle Blowing

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation children and young people and Staff will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to whistle blow or raise any issue in confidence. They must inform the Headteacher straight away (or if it relates to the Headteacher inform the Governors).

Child Protection

Staff at The Willows School are alert to the fact that whilst Extremism and Radicalisation is broadly a safeguarding issue there may be some instances where children and young people may be at direct risk of harm or neglect. For example; this could be due to a child or young person displaying

risky behaviours in terms of the activities they are involved in or the groups they are associated with or staff may be aware of information about a child or young person's family that may equally place a child at risk of harm. (These examples are for illustration and are not definitive or exhaustive). Therefore all adults working in The Willows School (including visiting staff, volunteers, contractors, and students on placement) are required to report instances where they believe a child may be at risk of harm or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher. In The Willows School our Safeguarding reporting arrangements are set out fully in our Safeguarding Policy.

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Sue Hales- Owen

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Paul Gregory-Hunt, Malcolm Shaw, Debbie Downie, Sarita Powell and Sarah Jones.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead works in line with the responsibilities as set out at Annex B of the DFE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' which is detailed in the Safeguarding Policy. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the focus person and local 'expert' for school staff, and others, who may have concerns about an individual child's safety or well-being and is the first point of contact for external agencies. In The Willows School the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be extended, at the appropriate time, to include the responsibilities of the PREVENT strand of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy.

Training

Whole school in-service training on Safeguarding is organised for staff and the Governors at least every three years and will comply with the prevailing arrangements agreed by the Local Authority and London Borough of Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board and will include training on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications. The Designated Safeguarding Lead attends training courses as necessary and the appropriate inter-agency training organised by the School & Local Safeguarding Children Board at least every two years.

Recruitment

We follow guidance for safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked and that we complete and maintain a single central record of vetting checks. We apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice and deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement.

We are alert to the possibility that persons may seek to gain positions within our school so as to unduly influence our school's character and ethos. We are aware that such persons seek to limit the opportunities for our children and young people thereby rendering them vulnerable to extremist views and radicalisation. By adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an on-going culture of vigilance we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

Role of the Governors

The Governors undertakes appropriate training to ensure that he is clear about the role and the parameters of their responsibilities as Governors, including the statutory safeguarding duties. The Governors also supports the ethos and values of our school and supports tackling extremism and radicalisation. In line with Recommendation 13 of Peter Clarke's report details of our Governors will be published on our school website to promote transparency. In line with the provisions set out in the DFE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2024, the Governors challenges the school's senior management team on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness.

The Governors reviews 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.

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

'Key Ingredients' for successful teaching in the context of 'push' and 'pull' factors

Push Factors Factors that push an individual / make an individual vulnerable to extremist messages	KEY INGREDIENTS	Pull Factors Factors that draw children and young people into extremist messages
Lack of excitement; frustration	Teacher confidence in many cases it will be the use of existing teaching skills and methods, which may well be the most effective approach. From prison settings, staff who are more confident in their abilities tend to perform much better even though they have not received specialist training	Charismatic/confident individuals (recruiters)
Lack of sense of achievement- seen as significant 'Lack of purpose'/ confidence in the future, life goals	Teacher attitudes and behaviours Willingness to admit you don't know; acknowledging controversial issues exist; awareness that I have a role to play; willingness to turn to others for help when you don't know about something.	Networks/sense of belonging
Lack of an outlet for views	Specific knowledge Understanding other cultures and religions as well as alternative values and beliefs (whilst being careful to avoid 'othering') Knowledge of an alternative values framework	Broader community views which enable or do not oppose extremism
Gaps in knowledge or understanding - both children and young people and their parents	Teaching practice/ pedagogy: Boosting critical thinking (seeing through propaganda, singular messages etc.) Helping to see multiple perspectives, Using multiple resources/methods. Embedding or sustaining dialogue following specialist interventions Enabling students to tackle difficult issues Linking school work to the wider community Drawing evidence from across the curriculum Developing in children and young people a sense of multiple identities, help children and young people become aware of and comfortable with, multiple personal identity	Persuasive, clear messages. Exploiting knowledge gaps
Sense of injustice		
Actual or perceived humiliating experiences (including bullying, racial discrimination as well as perceived humiliating experiences. Perhaps		

linked closely to sense of injustice).		
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Exclusion- lack of belonging to peer or community networks, associations, etc		Factors that are out of scope with this study
Factors that are out of scope with this study	Factors that are out of scope with this study	Sense of dignity and importance and loyalty
Disruptive home life	Support from Senior Leaders	Exciting (non-teaching) activities
Disaffection with wider societal issues	Pupil support processes	Sense of purpose in life

Signed: Malcolm Shaw
Headteacher