



Zest Academy Trust

Prevent policy

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Introduction

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views, including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Zest Academy Trust values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both pupils and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Zest Academy Trust is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Zest Academy Trust seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Definitions

Extremism – is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views

Radicalisation – is defined as the process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religion ideals and aspirations.

Fundamental British values – are a set of expected standards by which people resident in the United Kingdom must live.

Risk reduction

The Trustees, Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessments may include consideration of the school's religious curriculum, special education needs and disability policy, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of pupils by gender and Special educational needs, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

This risk assessment will be reviewed as part of the annual s175 return that is monitored by the local authority and the local safeguarding children board.

Safeguarding from extremism

We protect the right to freedom of expression. This policy is not intended or designed to restrict or prevent legitimate and lawful congregation or debate.

We have a dedicated anti-terrorism safeguarding office who will be informed with any incidents of extremism and or terrorism within our school community.

As is our responsibility under law, we will do our utmost to safeguard our pupils from being drawn into extremism and terrorism.

We have strong relationships with our local safeguarding children board (LSCB) and local police and will not hesitate to involve them at the earliest opportunity if safeguarding issues arise.

We encourage any pupil, parent, staff member or member of the wider school community to let our anti-terrorism safeguarding officer know if they have concerns about:

- Pupils becoming radicalised
- Groups, clubs or societies with extremist or radical views
- Friends and/or families of pupils becoming radicalised or involved in extremism
- Pupils planning to visit known areas of conflict

- Members of the school and wider community attempting to draw young and/or vulnerable pupils into extremism

Visitors and speakers coming into the school will be vetted prior to them having access to pupils, and all materials handed out to pupils will be checked by an appropriate adult.

'Channel' and 'Prevent'

'Channel' – a key element of the Home Office's 'Prevent' strategy, is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation.

As a school we will work with the local authority, local law enforcement, and religious and community leaders, to identify children vulnerable to radicalisation and to stamp out extremism if it arises. This includes identifying pupils:

- displaying feelings of grievance and injustice
- feeling under threat
- searching for identity, meaning and belonging
- who have a desire for status amongst their peers
- who have a desire for excitement and adventure
- displaying a need to dominate and control others
- who have a susceptibility to indoctrination
- displaying a radical desire for political or moral change
- who are susceptible to opportunistic involvement
- who have family or friends involved in extremism
- susceptible to being influenced or controlled by a group
- with relevant mental health issues

Preventing Radicalisation

We will always take allegations and concerns of radicalisation and/or terrorism seriously.

We will help pupils channel their desire for excitement and adventure into suitable and healthy activities.

Extremist propaganda is widely available online. The messages of extremists and fundamentalists will never be allowed to drown out the voices of moderate majority.

We work with local religious and cultural organisations to instil a strong sense of identity in our pupils, as well as a clear place and purpose within the school.

We monitor all internet activity that takes place on site and establish appropriate filters to protect children from terrorist and extremist material online.

Our Trust has an open, multi-faith and multi-racial community. We will always aim to integrate and engage every child within the school community, and in the wider community.

We will celebrate a range of different religious and cultural festivals across the year giving every child the opportunity to take part.

We will monitor and access incidents which suggest pupils are engaging, or are at risk of engaging in extremist activity and/or radicalisation.

Where a pupil has been identified as at risk of radicalisation, our school will take action proportionate to the incident/risk.

Community Links

We will include discussion about extremism and terrorism in our Academy Council meetings.

We will operate an open door policy for community members to report concerns.

We will open our doors to the community for festivals, religious and other events.

We will select a range of charities to support across the year which represent our school community, including local community groups.

Single Point of Contact

Our Trust, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The SPOC for Zest Academy Trust is Mark Hamblett.

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC and to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if this is not the same person.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

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

Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

“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.”

Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

“The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
- seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
- encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
- foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.”

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

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

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- identity crisis – the student / pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
- personal crisis – the student / pupil 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 / pupil'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 / pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
- experiences of criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration;
- special educational need – students / pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

However, 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.

Preventing Violent Extremism

Roles and Responsibilities of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

The SPOC for Waterloo Primary Academy is Mark Hamblett, who is responsible for:

- ensuring that staff of the school are aware that they are the SPOC in relation to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students/pupils from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism;
- raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of Waterloo primary Academy in relation to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- monitoring the effect in practice of the school's RE curriculum and assembly policy to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs;
- raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students/pupils from radicalization and involvement in terrorism;
- acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to students / pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism;
- collating relevant information in relation to referrals of vulnerable students / pupils into the Channel* process;
- attending Channel* meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed;
- reporting progress on actions to the Channel* Co-ordinator; and
- sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.

*Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It aims to establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals; safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.