Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

The Cottesloe School

Policy Type:	Non-Statutory
Reviewed by:	Mrs C Hankin (Assistant Headteacher - Safeguarding and Wellbeing) and Mrs C Stirk (Policies Governor)
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Other relevant policies include Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy Guidelines, Online Safety Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Behaviour Management Policy.

The health, safety and welfare of all the people that work or learn at The Cottesloe School are of fundamental importance. We aim to provide a safe, secure and pleasant environment for everyone where people are supported to fulfil their potential. The governing body, as an employer, takes responsibility for the health and safety of all our pupils, members of staff and others who visit our premises.

● **What is Prevent?**

Prevent forms one part of the government's counter-terrorism strategy called CONTEST.

CONTEST is the government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and was updated in June 2018. There are four pillars of the strategy:

Prevent	Pursue	Protect	Prepare
Safeguarding people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism	Stop terrorist attacks happening	Strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack	Mitigate the impact of a terrorist incident

Prevent aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism by working with government departments, local authorities and community organisations.

Prevent is relevant to everyone.

1.   Introduction

The Cottesloe School is committed to providing a secure environment for students, where children feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at The Cottesloe 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 or not.

The governors wish all parents and carers to know that they expect the Headteacher and staff to maintain a caring, respectful atmosphere in the school where the pupilsstudents can feel happy and secure and work to the best of their ability.   The governors believe that this atmosphere presently exists within the school.

Our school's Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy also draws upon the guidance contained in Department for Education's Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023" and specific resources and reports such as, "The Buckinghamshire Implementing Prevent in Education Toolkit and "The Prevent Duty 2015".

Definitions (Taken from The Buckinghamshire Implementing Prevent in Education Toolkit)

Terrorism: A violent action that endangers a person's life, other than that of the person committing the action; involves serious violence against a person; causes serious damage to property; creates a serious risk to the public's health and safety; or interferes with or seriously disrupts an electronic system.

Extremism: The vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

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

Extremist Ideology: An ideology is a set of beliefs, on which people, parties, or countries base their actions. Extremist Ideology is beliefs based upon hatred and violence.

*Islamism***:** refers to the broad spectrum of political movements that centre Islam in their politics. It is important to stress that Islam is a peaceful religion and that any Islamism that condones violence or terrorism cannot be taken to be representative of the majority.

*Far Right Groups***:** are political organisations whose politics can be positioned on the extreme right side of the political spectrum. Ideologies focus on patriotism, tradition and nationalism and promote racism, religious intolerance and xenophobia.

*Far Left Groups***:** have been associated with forms of anarchism, autonomism and communism. Groups advocate for revolutionary anti-capitalism and anti-globalization and desire the formation of far-left militant organisations meant to abolish capitalist systems and the upper ruling class.

Mixed, Unclear, Unstable Ideology: no well-defined or well-understood ideological motivation.

Incels – self-defined 'Involuntary Celibates' who believe that they are unable to form sexual relationships with women due to a combination of looks and their perception of societal structures.

Legislation and Guidance

The duty to prevent children and young people being radicalised is set out in the following documents:
• Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
• Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
• Prevent Duty Guidance (2015)
• Working Together to Safeguard Children

In adhering to this policy, and the procedures therein, staff and visitors will contribute to The Cottesloe School's delivery of the outcomes to all students.

This Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy is one element within our overall arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of all students in line with our statutory duties set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Aims:

The main aims of this policy statement are to ensure that all staff and governors are vigilant for the signs of radicalisation; that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues 'will not happen here' and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our children are safe from harm.

Objectives:

1. All governors, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism are and why we need to be vigilant in school.

2. All governors, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on anti-radicalisation and extremism and will follow the policy when issues arise.

3. The school will ensure this policy is available to the wider community through its website and in hard copy from the school reception on request.

2. Ethos and Practice

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources - students, staff or governors, or external sources - school community, external agencies or individuals. Our students 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 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.

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.

The Cottesloe School will 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 and feel valued and not marginalised.

Furthermore, at The Cottesloe School we are 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 Management Policy for students and the Code of Conduct for staff.

Through a broad and balanced curriculum, students explore the Healthy Relationships by way of cross-curricular themes and in particular the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) and assembly programme. We actively challenge students, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to our Healthy Relationships Agenda and seek to promote a positive approach to the areas named above.

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 groups, 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, 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, colour or culture;
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others;
- Anti-western or Anti-British views.

Our school will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority and/or Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership agreed processes and criteria for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

The Cottesloe School have determined Healthy Relationships to be:

- Others – Respect, Equality, Empathy
- Community – Tolerance, Democracy, Opportunity
- Self – Resonsibility, Honesty, Excellence

As a school, we aim to develop and nurture these by:

- Planning a vibrant, engaging Assembly programme with core ethical values and beliefs at its heart.

- A well-structured PSHCE programme which addresses all of the requirements of the programmes of study (looking at Democracy, British Values, Human Rights and responsibilities). Our PSHCE education programme will equip students with a sound understanding of risk and with the knowledge and skills necessary to make safe and informed decisions.

Principles and Values of the school curriculum

The Cottesloe School believes that the broad and balanced curriculum should:

- Develop a student's knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.
- Promote independent and responsible members of the school and local community.
- Encourage every student to be positive and active members of a democratic society.
- Develop self-confidence and self-esteem, and assist students to make informed choices regarding personal and social issues.
- Develop good relationships with other members of the school and the wider community.
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with relevant professionals and other school partners.
- Enable students to be aware of safety issues.
- Encourage respect for others regardless of race, gender and mental and physical disability.
- Have a strong Ethics and Philosophy programme.
- Have a broad and balanced curriculum which addresses many of these core values across a range of subject areas.

- Have a clearly communicated and consistently applied Behaviour Management Policy so that students understand what is expected of them and the consequences of both meeting and failing to meet these expectations.
- Uphold the Healthy Relationships Agenda
- Adopt a restorative approaches, where possible, to resolve any difficulties between members of our school community.
- Have a rigorous commitment to student safety (for example: trips and visits policy and procedures, Safeguarding procedures, Code of Conduct and Health and Safety procedures).

3. Curriculum and Teaching Approaches

We will all strive to eradicate the myths and assumptions that can lead to some young people becoming alienated and disempowered, especially where the narrow approaches children may experience elsewhere may make it harder for them to challenge or question these radical influences. In our school this will be achieved by good teaching, but also by adopting the methods outlined in research documents.

We will ensure that all of our teaching approaches help our students build resilience to extremism and give students a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. We will ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it.

We will be flexible enough to adapt our teaching approaches, as appropriate, to address specific issues so as to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation. In doing so we will apply the methodologies following the three broad categories of:

• Making a connection with young people through good [teaching] design and a student centred approach;
• Facilitating a 'safe space' for dialogue; and
• Equipping our students with the appropriate skills, knowledge, understanding and awareness for resilience.

Therefore, this approach will be embedded within the ethos of our school so that students know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation.

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 a curriculum that includes:

- Open discussion and debate, facilitated through PSHCE
- Work on anti-violence and restorative approaches addressed throughout curriculum and the behaviour management policy;

We will help support students who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a student is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences, we will ensure that students are offered support through TEAM Hub. Additionally, if necessary our school will seek external support from the Local Authority and external agencies.

The Cottesloe School has a 'share it' button on the school website which encourages students to inform the pastoral team of any bullying. As a school we also encourage our

students to respect other people with particular regard to protected characteristics: disability, race/ethnic identity, religion/beliefs, gender, sexual orientation and age.

Through a broad and balanced curriculum and the opportunities that lessons create, the staff and Governors of The Cottesloe School believe students are able to demonstrate:

- Their ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- Their acceptance of and engagement with the 'fundamental British values', and demonstrating the skills and attitudes that allow them to participate and contribute to life in modern Britain.
- Their understanding of the range of cultures within the school "and further afield" as preparation for life in modern Britain.

4. Use of External Agencies and Speakers

At The Cottesloe School, we encourage the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our students, however we will consistently positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences for our students.

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

- Any messages communicated to students 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 students through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies;
- Activities are properly embedded in the curriculum and clearly mapped to schemes of work to avoid contradictory messages or duplication;
- Activities are matched to the needs of students;
- Activities are carefully evaluated to ensure that they are effective.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school is to encourage students 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, and we may use external agencies or speakers to facilitate and support this.

Therefore, by delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, we will strive to ensure our students recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help students develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

5.. **Indicators**

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

These include:
- Identity Crisis – the student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society

- Personal Crisis – the student 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'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 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 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
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

6. **Recognising 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

7. **Behaviour Indicators**

The early identification of safeguarding risks and subsequent intervention activity to protect and divert people away from the risks of radicalisation is a key element of the Prevent strategy. Key indicators may be identified in children and young people which fall into a number of areas and whilst it would be unwise to make generalisations about a young person's behaviour or jump to any rash conclusions, concerns should be raised when a number of these behaviours are observed as they may indicate that an individual is at risk of being radicalised. The list below is not exhaustive and could indicate a range of safeguarding issues. It would also be unwise to adopt a prescriptive or formulaic approach to safeguarding as every case must be treated individually.

Attitude and Experiences
- Increased levels of anger
- Becoming increasingly argumentative
- Using language you wouldn't expect them to know.
- Refusing to listen or discuss different points of view
- Unwilling to engage with children who are different
- Becoming abusive to children who are different
- Using racist language
- Embracing conspiracy theories
- Feeling persecuted
- Changing friends and appearance
- Distancing themselves from old friends
- Change of routine
- No longer doing things they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Being secretive and reluctant to discuss their whereabouts
- Sympathetic to extremist ideologies and groups
- Legitimises/justifies violence/extreme groups
- Expresses opinions of absolute truth
- Closed to new ideas
- Fixated on a topic
- Asking inappropriate questions
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Low self-esteem
- Victims of bullying or discrimination

Online activity
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use.
- Changing online identity
- Having more than one online identity
- Spending a lot of time online or on the phone
- Researches and engages with conspiracy theories and discourse to an unhealthy degree
- Researches the logistics of conducting violent/ hateful acts

- Using public forums to exchange heated arguments with others about ideological differences
- Watching, sharing or creating films online which are linked to religious, political or racial hate.
- Joining or trying to join an extremist organisation
- Uses online tools (including communication platforms) to plan and research travel to conflict zones where violent extremist groups are known to be active
- Exploring new and unusual websites, chat forums and platforms.
- Joining new or secret groups since isolation.

Actions

- Possession of material or symbols associated with extremism
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- Displays symbols of affiliation or support associated with violent extremist groups
- Adopts behaviour which diverges from family practices
- A sudden change in daily habits
- Takes part in a group that is considered extreme
- Actively seeks to recruits individuals to a group with questionable motives
- Plans and discusses violent/ hateful acts
- Heightened interest in acquiring and using illegal weapons
- Questionable Artwork / Story themes / Play

Social

- isolating themselves from family and friends
- Getting a new friendship group
- Identity crisis – distancing themselves from cultural / religious heritage and feeling uncomfortable with their place in society
- Becomes closer to individuals or groups known to be violent extremists
- In contact (online and/or offline) with a group or network of individuals known to be violent extremists

Travel

- Plans or discusses a trip to a conflict zone in which violent extremist groups are known to be active
- Significant amount of unexplained time spent away from school/ place of work

8. **Online Risks**

Social media has been identified as the most important tool in the sharing of extreme material and propaganda, to radicalise and to recruit for their cause. Extremists operate predominantly online and the scale and ease of access to online extremist driven content is proving to be particularly difficult to counter.

Online risks are constantly evolving and shifting. These risks can be broadly split into three categories: extreme content, online networks and disinformation.

Extreme content

Content, or propaganda, produced by extremists is designed to spread quickly, identify supporters, influence public opinion and generate an emotive response.

Examples could include: graphic videos glorifying terror attacks; political speeches/sermons/ lectures; memes, images or gifs designed to spread hatred and/ or advocate violence.

Once made aware, mainstream platforms will remove content that breach their terms of use, however this will not stop content being saved and circulated by users on alternative platforms.

Online networks

Popular social media, messaging apps, chat forums, online gaming platforms and other communication tools are used by extremists to recruit vulnerable individuals. Many of these sites are unmoderated and unchecked allowing extreme messages to be seen by wider audiences.

We have seen a rise in social media influencers who repackage extreme messages. They use subtle tactics to draw people in and move them to lesser known spaces, normally unmoderated platforms. They are extremely relatable, using topics that are likely to interest young people, and have the ability to reach large numbers on mainstream media.

Education establishments should raise awareness of grooming processes and encourage young people to use technology in a safe and secure way. Working with parents can ensure that protective measures are put into place at home, such as managing an account's privacy settings and reducing exposure to strangers.

Disinformation

Disinformation, also known as 'fake news', is used by extremists to gain support for their cause. Producers of disinformation use a variety of tactics to deceive users into believing a story has credibility. For example: sophisticated web design, doctored videos/ images, sensationalist headlines, quotes and images taken out of context.

Education establishments should consider how to equip their young people with resilience and critical thinking skills to minimise the impact of disinformation.

The schools monitoring software is programmed to alert members of the schools safeguarding team to any concerns linked to extremism and terrorism.

9. **Procedure for referrals:**

The Point of Contact is the Designated Safeguarding Lead or other member of the safeguarding team, who is responsible for:
- Ensuring that staff of the school are aware and work together to protect students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students 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 within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to students who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism
- Attending Channel[1] meetings as necessary, or ensuring that the school is represented, and carrying out any actions as agreed
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner with appropriate personnel and/or local agencies.

10. Whistleblowing

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation, students, staff and governors will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to "whistleblow" or raise any issue in confidence.

They must inform the Headteacher straight away (or if it relates to the Headteacher inform the Chair of Governors). Please see the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

11. Safeguarding

Please refer to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for the full procedural framework on our Safeguarding and Child Protection duties.

Staff at The Cottesloe School will be alert to the fact that whilst Extremism and Radicalisation is broadly a safeguarding issue there may be some instances where a child or children may be at direct risk of harm or neglect. For example; this could be due to a child 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'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 Cottesloe School are required to report instances where they believe a child may be at risk of harm or neglect to a member of the safeguarding team via the confidential 'Safeguard' database.

At The Cottesloe School, our Safeguarding reporting arrangements are set out fully in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Training

Whole school in-service training on Safeguarding and Child Protection will be organised for staff every year and will, in part, include training on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications. All staff, volunteers and governors are required to complete the government's online Prevent training as part of their induction.

12. Role of Governing Body

The Governing Body of our School will undertake appropriate training to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibilities as governors, including their statutory safeguarding duties.

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[1] Channel is a multi-agency approach to safeguarding, supporting and protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk of radicalisation, extremism or terrorist related activity.

The Governing Board of our school will support the ethos and values of our school and will support the school in tackling extremism and radicalisation.

In line with the provisions set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023' the Governing Body will challenge the Senior Leadership Team on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed in two years (earlier if any legislative change).