SAFEGUARDING PUPILS WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO EXTREMISM

Our Vision:

We are committed to quality learning in a positive, happy and Christian atmosphere where everyone within the school community is valued as an individual. We expect everyone to, 'Treat others as you want them to treat you.' (Matthew 7:12-14). We have high expectations of all and strive to provide a safe, challenging, exciting and stimulating environment.

Our Values:

To ensure the safety of our pupils, staff and visitors are met through our school values of:

Respect – by respecting free speech subject to the laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.
Compassion – by showing compassion for vulnerable children and their families at risk of exploitation and radicalisation.
Creation – by creating a safe and secure environment which protects children against messages of all violent extremism.
Perseverance – by continually assessing the level of risk to children and their families being exploited by extremism and reduce the risk through our policies and procedures.
Service – by using the Prevent Strategy to safeguard children and their families from violent extremism.

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 justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Willaston Church of England Primary School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both Pupils / students 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 of 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. Willaston CE Primary is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in Appendix 1.

Willaston CE Primary 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.

<u>Risk reduction</u>

The school Governors, the Headteacher who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead, will access the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's RE curriculum, SEND policy, Collective Worship policy, the use of the school premises by external agencies, integration of pupils by gender and SEN, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

This risk assessment will be reviewed as part of monitoring of safeguarding by our Governors.

Response

Our school, 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 Willaston CE Primary is Mr G Graham. The responsibilities of the SPOC are described in Appendix 2.

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 may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

Approved by Governors, February 2025



Signed Chair of Governors

Appendix 1

INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION

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

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

Appendix 2

PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM -
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC)

The SPOC for Willaston CE Primary School is Mr G Graham, who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the school are aware that you 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 Willaston CE Primary School 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 radicalisation 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 from 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 is led by the West Midlands Police Counter-Terrorism Unit, and 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.