Yesoiday HaTorah Girls' Academy

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

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1. 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 idealogy that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Yesoiday HaTorah Girls' Academy 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.

Yesoiday HaTorah Girls' Academy is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils, where children feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at the 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.

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 S157 of the Education Act 2002.

2. School Ethos and Practice

When operating this Policy, the 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 – pupils, staff or governors – or external sources – school community, external agencies or individuals. Our pupils 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 pupils.

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.

Therefore, the school will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our pupils are enriched, understand and become tolerant of differences and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.

3. Recognising the indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

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 pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society:
- Personal Crisis – the 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;
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the 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 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 Education Need – pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivation of others.

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.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by pupils or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy for pupils and the Discipline Policy for staff.

We will ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it. Radicalisation and extremism will be an integral part of annual staff safeguarding training.

Our school has identified a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the school for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism; the SPOC for Yesoiday HaTorah is Mrs R Greenberg (also the Designated Safeguarding Lead).

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be a risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC. We will help support pupils who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a pupil is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences we will ensure that the pupil is offered assistance. Additionally in such instances our school will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

Our school will closely follow the locally agreed procedures as set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board for safeguarding individual vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

4. 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, primarily via Citizenship and PSHE sessions (both discrete and embedded throughout the rest of the curriculum); by building good, lifelong learning behaviours, including communication, independence, motivation, determination, curiosity, bravery and collaboration; by adopting the methods outlined in the Government's guidance 'Teaching approaches that help build resilience to extremism among young people' DfE 2011 . These approaches include setting targets for young people to build a sense of ownership; creating a safe space for dialogue between staff and pupils; building resilience in pupils; improving pupil skills for collaborative work; improving pupils' ability to interact with each other. We will

ensure that all of our teaching approaches help our pupils build resilience to extremism and give pupils a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. The school will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We will teach and encourage pupils to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference. It is indeed our most fundamental responsibility to keep our pupils safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

We will also liaise with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to challenge extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our pupils' experiences and horizons.

5. Use of External Agencies and Speakers

The school encourages the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our pupils; however we will positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences for our pupils. This may include checking the DBS of external providers, viewing material that will be used beforehand and conducting a social media check on such agencies or individuals. However, it should be noted that members of the school staff are always present when visitors are speaking with children.

Such vetting is to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages or that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the 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 pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils
- Activities are carefully evaluated by the school to ensure that they are effective

Therefore by delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, we will strive to ensure our pupils recognise risk and build

resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help pupils develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

6. Whistleblowing

Where there are any concerns of radicalisation pupils and staff will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to whistle blow or raise any issue in confidence. Please refer to the separate Whistleblowing Policy.

7. Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our school will follow government guidance on safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring the 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 such vetting checks.

We will apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general and in doing so will deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement. We will be 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 pupils thereby rendering them vulnerable to extremist views and radicalisation as a consequence.

Therefore, by adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an ongoing culture of vigilance within our school and staff team we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

8. Role of Governing Body

The Governing Body of our school will undertake annual training led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibilities as Governors, including their statutory safeguarding duties.

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.

In line with the provisions set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' the governing body will challenge the school's senior leadership team on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness. Mr M Bamberger is the nominated Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding and Prevent.

9. Policy Adoption, Monitoring and Review

This Policy was considered and adopted by the Governing Body in line with their overall duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

Parents/carers will be issued with a hard copy of this Policy on request. This Policy will also be made available to parents/carers via the school's website.

Governors will review this policy annually but may amend and adopt any amendments outside of this timeframe in accordance with any new legislation or guidance.

Some Related Policies:
Child Protection Policy
Cyber Protection Plan
E Safety Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Ethos Policy
Prevent Risk Assessment
Recruitment Policy
Whistleblowing Policy

Appendix 1

Spotting signs and getting help

Radicalisation can be really difficult to spot. Signs that may indicate a child is being radicalised include:

- isolating themselves from family and friends
- talking as if from a scripted speech
- unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- increased levels of anger
- increased secretiveness, especially around internet use.

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. Extremists might target them and tell them they can be part of something special, later brainwashing them into cutting themselves off from their friends and family.

However, these signs don't necessarily mean a child is being radicalised – it may be normal age related behavior or a sign that something else is wrong. If you notice any change in a child's behaviour and you're worried, you must report your concerns to the Safeguarding Lead, Mrs R Greenberg dsl@yhmat.org.uk