# PREVENTING EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION POLICY
# 2021 - 2024

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| *Policy Reviewed and Adopted by the Governing Board on:* | *September 2021* |
| *Signed (Chair of Local Governing Board):* | *Mr J Taylor* |
| *Date of Next Review:* | *September 2024* |
| *Responsible Officer:* | *Mr D Thurston* |

**Introduction**
Countesthorpe Academy is committed to providing a secure environment for all students, staff and stakeholders.

The current threat from terrorism extremism in the United Kingdom can involve the exploitation of vulnerable people, including children, young people and vulnerable adults to involve them in terrorism or activity in support of terrorism.

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.

The 2011 Prevent Strategy has three specific objectives:
- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support and
- Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.

As of July 1st 2015 there is a statutory duty for schools to report on extremists' behaviours or act upon concerns they have related to extremism. Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies in the exercise of their functions to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

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.

The Academy values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning society's values. Both 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 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 extremism and terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

The Academy is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and this is noted with the Safeguarding Policy.

This Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy also draws upon the guidance contained in the "Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales, March 2015"; DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2015" and "Working together to safeguard children, March 2015".
Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are to be found in Appendix 1.

In adhering to this Policy, and the procedures therein, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors will contribute to the Academy's delivery of the outcomes to all children, as set out in the Children Act 2004.

**Academy Ethos and Practice**

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in Academy, whether from internal sources – students, staff or governors, or external sources – the Academy community, external agencies or individuals.

It is imperative that students and parents see the Academy as a safe place where they can discuss and explore controversial issues safely and in an unbiased way and where teachers encourage and facilitate this.

The Academy recognises that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for students. If extremist views are failed to be challenged, the Academy is failing to protect 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.

Therefore, the Academy will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that students are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.  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, staff, visitors or parents will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with. Where misconduct by a teacher is proven, the matter will be referred to the National Academy for Teaching and Leadership for their consideration as to whether to a Prohibition Order is warranted.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities Academy staff will be alert to:
- Disclosures by students of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of Academy, 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
- Local schools, Local Authority services, and 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.

**Teaching Approaches**

All staff at the Academy will 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. This will be achieved by good teaching, primarily during PSHE and Citizenship lessons; but also by adopting the methods outlined in the Government's guidance 'Teaching approaches that help build resilience to extremism among young people', DfE 2011.

All the teaching approaches will help students build resilience to extremism and give them a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills.  All staff will be equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it.  Teaching approaches will be flexible so that they can be adapted, as appropriate, to address specific issues in order to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation.

This approach will be embedded within the ethos of Academy so that students know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation. This will work in conjunction with the approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students as defined in OfSTED's School Inspection Handbook and will include a programme of assemblies dedicated to promoting fundamental British values to help further promote this rounded development of students.

The Academy will also work with local partners, families and communities to ensure understanding of the local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening students' experiences and horizons.   Students who may be vulnerable to such influences will be supported as part of the wider safeguarding responsibilities.   Where it is believed that a student is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences, the student will be offered mentoring.

Additionally, in such instances the Academy will refer the case to the Leicestershire Channel panel.
The values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs will be promoted.  Students will be taught to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith. It is indeed the most fundamental responsibility to keep students safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

**Use of External Agencies and Speakers**
External agencies or speakers are encouraged to enrich the experiences of students.  These will be positively vetted before being engaged.

Such vetting is to ensure that the Academy does not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages or that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the Academy's values and ethos.   In some instances, the work of external agencies may not directly be connected with the rest of the Academy curriculum so care will be taken to ensure that this work is of benefit to students.

The Academy will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:
- Any messages communicated to students support fundamental British Values
- Any messages communicated to students are consistent with the ethos of the Academy and do not marginalise any communities, groups or individuals
- Any messages communicated to students 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.

The ethos of the Academy 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 external agencies or speakers may be used to facilitate and support this.
Therefore, by delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, students should be able to recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such

risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help them develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

**Risk reduction**

The Governors, Headteacher, the Senior and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and Pastoral lead will assess the level of risk within the Academy and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the Academy's RE curriculum, E-Safety policy, visiting speakers, the use of Academy premises by external agencies, Anti-bullying Policy and other issues specific to the Academy's profile, community and philosophy.

The Academy will screen staff, visitors and volunteers to ensure that they will not deliver messages of extremism or radicalisation.

This risk assessment will be reviewed as part of the annual report to Governors that is monitored by the local authority and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

**Response**

The Academy 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. The responsibilities of the SPOC are described in Appendix 2. The SPOC at Countesthorpe Academy is the Assistant Headteacher, Kat Russell.

Staff at the Academy will be alert to the fact that whilst Extremism and Radicalisation is broadly a safeguarding issue there may be some instances where a student or students may be at direct risk of harm or neglect. For example; this could be due to a student 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 student's family that may equally place a student at risk of harm. (These examples are for illustration and are not definitive or exhaustive). Therefore, all adults working in the Academy (including visiting staff, volunteers, contractors and students on placement) are required to report instances where they believe a student may be at risk of harm or neglect or if they have concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism. They should speak with the SPOC, Kat Russell, or other Safeguarding Leads. **Disclosures should be reported without delay in line with guidance in our Safeguarding policy.**

**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:
   o Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs
   o Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts
   o Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts or
   o 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. Students 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 Academy staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.
6. Indicators of vulnerability include:
   o Identity Crisis – the student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
   o 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 and they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
   o 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
   o Unmet Aspirations – the student may have perceptions of injustice, a feeling of failure or rejection of civic life
   o Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration
   o 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.

**Appendix 2**

**Preventing violent extremism**

Roles and responsibilities of the single point of contact (SPOC)

The SPOC for Countesthorpe Academy is Assistant Headteacher, Damian Thurston, who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the Academy are aware that you are the SPOC in relation to protecting 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 about the role and responsibilities of Countesthorpe Academy in relation to protecting students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the Academy'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 Academy about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Acting as the first point of contact within the Academy for case discussions relating to students who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism
- Collating relevant information from in relation to referrals of vulnerable students 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.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417943/Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales.pdf