

PREVENTING EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION POLICY

1. Introduction

Weymouth English Centre (“the School”) understands its responsibilities under the Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 to prevent people of all ages being radicalised or drawn into terrorism and seeks to meet its obligations in the ways shown below.

2. Context

The School accepts students aged 13 (in special circumstances 12) to 17 from around the world during the summer school holidays.

In its busiest weeks it may have up to 250 students, 30 staff and work with up to 150 homestay providers.

The School has always promoted a multi-cultural environment where respect for and tolerance of other beliefs is required.

The School uses classrooms and other facilities at Weymouth College, which is located in Weymouth, a town of approximately 55,000 inhabitants with a predominantly Caucasian population.

Homestay providers are contracted via an agency, Homestay and Venture Breaks Ltd.

3. Prevent Lead

Strong leadership is an essential part of preventing extremism and radicalisation.

The School’s Prevent Lead is Christopher Hills (Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead). When he is not available, Andrew Pitman (Designated Safeguarding Lead and Activities Manager) is responsible.

Responsibility for the Prevent risk assessment and action plan (see point 4 below) lies with Christopher Hills. It is his duty to ensure delivery of an effective risk assessment/ action plan and policy as outlined here.

4. Risk Assessment of Current Situation and Action Plan

A risk assessment has been produced showing what is already being done and what still needs to be done; it will be reviewed and updated at least annually.

5. Working With Local Partners

The School has made and maintains contact with the local authority Prevent coordinator to understand their role, the support available and the people to contact in the event that the School needs to report a case of extremism or radicalisation or needs advice relating to the same.

The School will share information with all local organisations as appropriate.

6. Understanding Terminology

Radicalisation is the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of mind.

Extremism means holding extreme political or religious views which may deny rights to any group or individual. It can be expressed in vocal or active opposition to core British values including:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- respectful tolerance of different faiths or beliefs

Extremism can refer to a range of views, e.g. racism, homophobia, right-wing ideology, as well as any religious extremism.

7. Understanding The Risk of Extremism

Staff, students and other adults (group leaders, homestays etc.) may arrive at the School already holding extremist views or, whilst attending the School, they may be influenced by a range of factors: global events, peer pressure, media, family views, extremist materials (hardcopy or online), inspirational speakers, friends or relatives being harmed, social networks.

People who are vulnerable are more likely to be influenced.

Their vulnerability could stem from a range of causes, including: loss of identity or sense of belonging, isolation, exclusion, mental health problems, sense of injustice, personal crisis, victim of hate crime or discrimination, and bereavement.

8. Counteracting Risks

The School promotes a safe and supportive international environment via clear expectations of accepted behaviours and those, including radicalisation and extremism, that will not be tolerated.

The School promotes core British values through documents given to students, notices around the School, information given during the induction at the beginning of each course and through the curriculum. The approach is to educate about how things are in the UK although they may be different in the students' own countries.

Where possible, staff, homestays and other adults should:

- Develop a critical awareness and thought to counter accepting extremism without question, especially of online material.

- Challenge radical or extremist views in any context (formal or informal). In most situations this requires an immediate response, referring to the international environment of the School and tolerance expected, then reporting concerns (see section 10).
- Be ready to react when world or local events cause upset and the likelihood of conflicting feelings being expressed. The Prevent Lead will take the initiative in these situations.
- Be observant and vigilant in noticing any signs of radical or extremist behaviour.
- Get to know the students, their home circumstances and friendship groups, making it easier to spot changes in behaviour.
- Be particularly aware of and supportive to any students identified as vulnerable.

The School has strong filters on IT equipment and clear rules on accessing extremist or terrorist websites as well as the use of social networks to exchange extremist or terrorist views.

The School ensures that extremist speakers do not use the School's premises to distribute material or expound views.

9. Training

All members of the School's staff undergo basic training in preventing extremism and radicalisation. This includes an online training course followed by face to face training during staff induction sessions.

10. Signs That May Cause Concern

Students talking about exposure to extremist materials or views outside the School (in this event, information must be shared with relevant local authorities).

Changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming isolated.

Fall in standard of work, poor attendance, disengagement.

Changes in attitude, e.g. intolerant of differences/ having closed mind.

Asking questions about certain topics (e.g. connected to extremism).

Offering opinions that appear to have come from extremist ideologies.

Attempts to impose own views/ beliefs on others.

Use of extremist vocabulary to exclude others or incite violence.

Accessing extremist material online or via social network sites.

Overt new religious practices.

Drawings or posters (e.g. in accommodation) showing extremist ideology/ views/ symbols.

Students voicing concerns about anyone.

Any concerns relating to a person under 18 are safeguarding issues and should be dealt with by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will contact the LSCB where appropriate.

11. How and When to React to Concerns

All members of staff, students, homestays and other adults are given the names of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and told to contact them if they become aware of any issues concerning extremism or radicalisation, however small they may seem at the time.

Confidentiality is assured for any persons reporting a concern.

Every case reported will be dealt with sensitively and carefully.

12. Records

Records are kept of all staff training and of any referrals to outside agencies.

13. Policy Preparation and Review

This policy was prepared by Christopher Hills, Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The policy will be reviewed after 12 months or earlier if there are changes in relevant legislation or in response to any significant incidents or changes in circumstances.

Date of last review: January 2018.

Date next review due: January 2019.