

Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

1. Policy statement

Wendover Online School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. Every member of staff recognises that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. We take very seriously our duty to promote community cohesion and fundamental British values as part of the curriculum. The Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation Policy sets out our beliefs, strategies and procedures to protect vulnerable individuals from being radicalised or exposed to extremist views, by identifying who they are and promptly providing them with support.

2. Links to other policies

This Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation Policy links to the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Safer Recruitment and Equal Opportunities Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on schools to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ('the Prevent duty') and in so-doing have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The Prevent duty came into force on 1 July 2015. The following national guidelines should also be read when working with this policy;

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (September 2023)
- The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)
- DfE 'The Prevent Duty' (June 2015)
- DfE 'Social media and travel to Syria and Iraq – briefing note for schools' (Undated)

3. Aims and principles

This policy is intended to provide a framework for dealing with issues relating to vulnerability, radicalisation and exposure to extreme views. We recognise that we are well placed to be able to identify safeguarding issues and this policy clearly sets out how the school will deal with such incidents and identifies how the curriculum and ethos underpins our actions. The objectives are that:

- All staff will have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is and why we need to be vigilant in school.
- All staff will know what the school policy is on tackling extremism and radicalisation and will follow the policy guidance swiftly when issues arise.
- All students will understand the dangers of radicalisation and exposure to extremist views; building resilience against these and knowing what to do if they experience them.
- All parents and guardians are made aware that the school has policies in place to keep students safe from harm and that the school regularly reviews its systems to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

The main aims of this policy are to ensure that staff are fully engaged in being vigilant about 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 students are safe from harm. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will ensure there are procedures in place so that all members of the school community under the risks of radicalisation are dealt with appropriately.

4. Definitions and indicators

Radicalisation is defined as 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 the mind. Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views.

There are a number of behaviours which may indicate a child is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extreme views. These include:

- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists.
- Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group.
- Day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause.
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause.
- Possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause.
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause.
- Communications with others that suggests identification with a group, cause or ideology.
- Using insulting to derogatory names for another group.
- Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person – these may include:
 - physical or verbal assault
 - provocative behaviour
 - damage to property
 - derogatory name calling
 - possession of prejudice-related materials
 - prejudice related ridicule or name calling

- inappropriate forms of address
- refusal to co-operate
- attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations
- condoning or supporting violence towards others.

5. Procedures for referrals

- 5.1. Although serious incidents involving radicalisation have not occurred at Wendover Online School to date, it is important for us to be constantly vigilant and remain fully informed about the issues which affect the local area, and society in which we teach. Staff are reminded to suspend any 'professional disbelief' that instances of radicalisation 'could not happen here' and to be 'professionally inquisitive' where concerns arise, referring any concerns through the appropriate channels (please refer to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).
- 5.2. We believe that it is possible to intervene to protect people who are vulnerable. Early intervention is vital and staff must be aware of the established processes for front line professionals to refer concerns about individuals and/or groups. We must have the confidence to challenge, the confidence to intervene and ensure that we have strong safeguarding practices based on the most up-to-date guidance and best practice.
- 5.3. The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is trained in Child Protection and Safeguarding and will deal swiftly with any referrals made by staff or with concerns reported by staff in the school.
- 5.4. The DSL will decide on the most appropriate course of action on a case-by-case basis and will decide when a referral to external agencies is needed (see Appendix 1 – Dealing with referrals). In the unlikely event that they are unavailable, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) will be responsible for making a referral.
- 5.5. As with any child protection referral, staff must be made aware that if they do not agree with a decision not to refer, they can make the referral themselves using the contact details, which are found in Appendix 1.
- 5.6. In the case of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), from October 2015, it has been mandatory for teachers to report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Further details are in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The risks associated with children missing from education have been given more prominence since KCSIE was first published. Further details are in the Attendance Policy.

6. SLT and staff

- 6.1. Staff will be fully briefed during annual INSET about what to do if they are concerned about the possibility of radicalisation relating to a student, or if they need to discuss specific children whom they consider to be vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist views.
- 6.2. The SLT will review this policy regularly and ensure that procedures are adequate; furthermore, the DSL will report to the SLT on any concerns relating to extremism and radicalisation. The SLT will work in conjunction with external agencies to decide the best course of action to address concerns which arise.

7. The role of the curriculum

- 7.1. Our curriculum is broad and balanced and promotes respect, tolerance and diversity. Students are encouraged to share their views and recognise that they are entitled to have their own different beliefs which should not be used to influence others. The curriculum includes activities to promote community cohesion and fundamental British values.
- 7.2. Our Personal, Social Health and Economic (PSHE) provision, assemblies and pastoral support programmes teach students to respect others, to be inquisitive and understanding of those who are different and work towards promoting a harmonious and supportive school community. The use of IT in school is regularly monitored by staff and teachers and they are encouraged to look for signs of undesirable interactions so that appropriate action may be taken.
- 7.3. Students are regularly taught about how to stay safe when using the internet and are encouraged to recognise that people are not always who they say they are online. They are taught to seek adult help if they are upset or concerned about anything they read or see on the internet.

8. Staff training

Through INSET opportunities in school, we will ensure that our staff are fully aware of the threats, risks and vulnerabilities that are linked to extremism and radicalisation; are aware of the process of extremism and radicalisation and how this might be identified early on and are aware of how we can provide support as a school to ensure that our students are resilient and able to resist involvement in radical or extreme activities. Staff are made aware of what action to take in response, including processes and policies that will enable them to make referrals to Prevent (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-referral-to-prevent>). In addition, all academic staff are required to complete the TES Educare online training course called 'The Prevent Duty'.

Policy review

This policy is designed to set good practice standards. However, the school recognises that best practice develops over time and, as such, will update it regularly in light of experience and as a result of changes in legislation or its own internal organisation and policies. As with all Wendover policies, this policy will be reviewed according to our comprehensive policy review calendar.

Date of last policy review: August 2024

Date of next review: August 2025

Appendix 1: Dealing with referrals

We are aware of the potential indicating factors that a child is vulnerable to being radicalised or exposed to extreme views, including peer pressure, influence from other people or the internet, bullying, crime and anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race/hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity, prejudicial behaviour and personal or political grievances. In the event of prejudicial behaviour the following system will be followed:

- All incidents of prejudicial behaviour are to be reported directly to the DSL via the Safeguarding form.
- All incidents will be fully investigated and recorded in line with the procedures in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Parents or guardians will be contacted and the incident discussed in detail, aiming to identify motivating factors, any changes in circumstances at home, parental views of the incident and to assess whether the incident is serious enough to warrant a further referral. A note of this meeting will be kept alongside the initial referral in the Safeguarding log.
- The Head of Key Stage (HOKS) will follow-up any referrals for a period of four weeks after the incident to assess whether there is a change in behaviour and/or attitude and will brief the SLT accordingly. Further meetings with parents or guardians will be held if there is not a significant positive change in behaviour.
- In the event of a referral relating to serious concerns about potential radicalisation or extremism, the school will make a Prevent referral, as set out at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-referral-to-prevent>.