



SEDBERGH SCHOOL

Preventing Extremism & Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy

Version	2021.1
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Policy Owner	Deputy Head
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Introduction

In response to the updated Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) which now contains a duty to have clear policies in order to prevent pupils from being drawn into extremism, terrorism and radicalisation, a policy has been written:

Sedbergh School is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils, where children feel safe and are kept safe. The School recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, irrespective of the role they undertake or whether or not their role involves direct contact or responsibility for children. In adhering to this policy, and the procedures contained therein, Staff and visitors contribute to the School's delivery of the outcomes to all children, as set out in Section 10 (2) of The Children's Act of 2004. This Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy is one element within our overall School arrangements

to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, in line with our statutory duties as set out in Section 175 of The Education Act 2002.

Our School's Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy also draws upon the guidance contained in the DfE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: January 2021', 'Prevent: Resources Guide', 'Tackling Extremism in the UK', DfE's 'Teaching Approaches that help Build Resilience to Extremism among Young People' and Peter Clarke's Report of July 2014. Reference is also made to the duty to actively promote fundamental British values of tolerance, mutual respect and democracy.

School Ethos and Practice

When operating this policy Sedbergh 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 – children and adults – or from external sources, such as external agencies or individuals. Our children see our School as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this.

As a School we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children, thereby constituting 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 children.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and the mistrust of others, based on ignorance or prejudice. Education is a powerful weapon against this; equipping children with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way. Therefore, we seek to provide a broad and balanced teaching programme, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our children are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity, and feel valued and not marginalised. Furthermore, we are aware that children could 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 children may themselves reflect or display views that may be discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including the use of derogatory language. Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by children or Staff will always be challenged and, where appropriate, dealt with in line with our Disciplinary Policy (Reward and Conduct) for children and the Code of Conduct for staff.

As part of wider child protection/safeguarding responsibilities, Staff are alert to:

- disclosures by children of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of School, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where children have not actively sought these out;

- graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images;
- children accessing extremist material online, including social networking sites;
- parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance;
- partner schools, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting children in other schools or settings;
- children 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, and
- extreme anti-Western or anti-British views.

Teaching Approaches

We strive to eradicate the myths and assumptions that can lead to some children 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 guidance and support be delivered formally and explicitly in PSHE lessons and assemblies and informal meetings and conversations with tutors and teachers. We ensure that all of our support and approaches will help our children build resilience to extremism and give them a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. We develop strategies and staff training to ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it. We are flexible enough to adapt our teaching approaches, as appropriate and address specific issues so as to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation. In doing so we follow the three broad categories of:

- making a connection with children through positive engagement and a learner centred approach;
- facilitating a “safe space” for dialogue; and
- Equipping our pupils with the appropriate skills, knowledge, understanding and awareness for resilience.

Therefore this approach will be embedded within the ethos of our School so that children know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation. This will work in conjunction with our School’s approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children.

Our goal is to build mutual respect and understanding and to promote the use of dialogue not violence as a form of conflict resolution. We will achieve this by using an approach that includes:

- Citizenship topics which take place throughout the School formally in PSHE lessons.
- Open discussion and debate.
- Work on anti-violence and a restorative approach to conflict resolution.

If necessary, we will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism such as the Cumbrian Local Safeguarding Children Board, Cumbria Police and Cumbria County Council.

At Sedbergh School, we 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 children to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith. It is indeed our most fundamental responsibility to keep our children safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

Use of External Agencies and Speakers

When inviting visiting speakers to our School we will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- any messages communicated to children 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 children through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies;
- activities are matched to the needs of children and
- Activities are carefully evaluated by schools to ensure that they are effective.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school is to encourage children 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 we may use external agencies or speakers to facilitate and support this. Therefore by delivering a broad and balanced programme, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, we strive to ensure our children recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help children develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

See Policy: Visiting Speakers

Whistle Blowing

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation, children and staff will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to whistle blow or raise any issue in confidence. They must inform the DSL or Headmaster straight away (or if it relates to the Headmaster inform the Chairman of Governors).

Child Protection

Staff at Sedbergh School are alert to the fact that whilst Extremism and Radicalisation is broadly a safeguarding issue there may be some instances where a child or children may be at direct risk of harm or neglect. For example; this could be due to a pupil 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 pupil's family that may equally place a child at risk of harm. (These examples are for illustration and are not definitive or exhaustive).

Therefore all adults working at the School (including visiting staff, volunteers, contractors, and students on placement) are required to report instances where they believe a child may be at risk of harm or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Headmaster. At Sedbergh School, our child protection and safeguarding reporting arrangements are set out fully in our **Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy**. Academic staff are all formally trained and certified in an online 'Prevent' course through the EduCare provider. This includes the use of the "Channel" process for advice guidance, assessment and referral. This process is an open and transparent service and is used with the full understanding and support of the child. Where this service is refused and a risk remains full consideration must be given to making a referral to Cumbria Children's Services and/or the police.

Access to the internet and radicalisation

The most likely source of influence on children in respect of terrorism and radicalisation is the Internet. The School has specific policies in place to ensure the safe use of the Internet by children. Please see the School's **Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy** and **E-Safety Policy**.

Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our School will follow guidance for safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, including a separate barring check where necessary, that references are always received and checked and prohibitions and disqualifications are examined in order to fully complete and maintain a single central record of such vetting checks. We 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 are 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 children thereby rendering them vulnerable to extremist views and radicalisation as a consequence. Therefore, by adhering to safe 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.

Monitoring and Review

At Sedbergh School, the Headmaster and Governors will actively evaluate the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring the staff group's understanding and application of the procedures within this policy as their overall duty to safeguard children.

LET
August 2021