



Breakaway

Prevention of extremism and radicalisation policy

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A hands-on approach to help children in Slough be

..... Safe, Secure and Successful

Introduction

Breakaway is committed to providing a secure environment for children, where children feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at Breakaway 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 Safeguarding Policy is one element within our overall arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of all Children in line with our statutory duties.

Ethos and Practice

When operating this policy we use 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 home, whether from internal sources –children, staff or external sources - our community, external agencies or individuals. Our children should be allowed to see their home as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our staff encourage and facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens.

As a home 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 children.

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 children. Our approach is a powerful weapon against this; equipping children with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way.

We therefore will provide a broad and balanced approach, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our children are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.

We are also aware that children 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 children 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 children or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour and Discipline Policy for children and the Code of Conduct for staff.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities staff will be 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 through 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
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views

Our home will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority and/or our Safeguarding Children Board's agreed processes and criteria for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

Approaches

We will all 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.

We will ensure that all of our approaches help our children build resilience to extremism and give children a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skill. We will ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it.

We will be flexible enough to adapt our approaches, as appropriate, so as to address specific issues so as to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation.

In doing so we will apply the 'key ingredients' for success as set out in the three broad categories of:

- Making a connection with children.
- Facilitating a 'safe space' for dialogue, and
- Equipping our children with the appropriate skills, knowledge, understanding and awareness for resilience

Therefore this approach will be embedded within the ethos of our home so that children know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation.

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:

- Valuing Citizenship.
- Open discussion and debate
- Work on anti-violence and a restorative approach throughout
- Focussed programmes in specific situations

We will also work with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to ensure our home understands and embraces our local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our children's experiences and horizons.

We will help support children who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities, and where we believe a child is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences we will ensure that that child is offered mentoring.

Additionally in such instances we will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

At our home we 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 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.

Our approach will therefore 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 home 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 properly embedded and clearly avoid contradictory messages or duplication
- Activities are matched to the needs of children
- Activities are carefully evaluated to ensure that they are effective.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our home 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. By delivering a broad and balanced approach we will 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.

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. Please refer to the SCF's Whistle Blowing Policy.

Child Protection

Please refer to our Child Protection Policy for the full procedural framework on our Child Protection duties.

Staff at our home will be 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 child 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 child'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 our home (including visiting staff, volunteers' contractors, etc.) are required to report instances where they believe a child may be at risk of harm or neglect to the Manager.

Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our home will follow guidance for safer recruitment best practice, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked.

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 home so as to unduly influence our 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 safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an ongoing culture of vigilance within our staff team we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

Policy Adoption, Monitoring and Review

This policy was considered and adopted in line with our overall duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'

The manager 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.

Staff Training

Breakaway staff have been training in WRAP (Prevent radicalisation) training and have attended workshops to pick up early signs of radicalisation.