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Section 3.29 Prevent Policy

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation

Frensham Heights is committed to providing a secure environment for all our students and staff.

The current threat from terrorism and 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 Prevent Strategy has three specific objectives:

- tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
- intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation
- enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

As of 1st July 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.

Frensham values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our 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.

This policy is concerned with all forms of grooming that could lead to violent extremism. At the time of writing, the school acknowledges that the biggest threats come from Islamist and Extreme Right Wing Ideologies, but there is also reference in government guidance to a need for awareness of the possible threat from other ideologies such as antisemitism, misogyny, anti-establishment, anti-LGBT grievances and religious or ethnic superiority. Staff should also be aware of the danger from Involuntary Celibacy (Incels) culture and how conspiracy theories can act as a gateway to radicalised thinking.

Frensham will not attempt to silence strong voices or opinion; however it is concerned with preventing the translation of strongly held views into deliberate violence against others.

Frensham Heights is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern, and this is noted with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

This Policy also draws upon the guidance contained in the “Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales, updated March 2024”; DfE Guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025” and “Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023”.

The government definition 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 Frensham’s delivery of the outcomes to all children, as set out in the Children Act 2004.

School Ethos and Practice

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

It is imperative that our students and parents see our school as a safe place where they can discuss and explore controversial issues safely and in an unbiased way 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 our students. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views, we are failing to protect our 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, at Frensham we will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals so that our students are enriched by, understand, and become accepting of, difference and diversity, and to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and are not marginalised.

We are aware that 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 College for Teaching and Leadership for their consideration as to whether to a Prohibition Order is warranted.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities school staff will be alert to:

* Disclosures by students 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 students have not actively sought these out.

- * Graffiti symbols, writing or artwork 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, hateful 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

We will all 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. In our school this will be achieved by good teaching, primarily during Horizon (PSHE) 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.

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

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

This approach will be embedded within the ethos of our school 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 our school's approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students.

We will also work with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to ensure our school understands and embraces our local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our student's experiences and horizons. We will help to support students who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a student is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences we will ensure that that student is offered mentoring.

Additionally in such instances our school will refer the case to the Surrey Police Prevent Team. Using the following referral form

<https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/community-safety/professionals/prevent/referral-process>

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 students 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 students safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

Use of External Agencies and Speakers

At Frensham Heights we encourage the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our students; however, we will positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences for our students.

Such vetting is to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages or that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the school's values and ethos. We must be aware that in some instances, the work of external agencies may not directly be connected with the rest of the school curriculum, so we need to ensure that this work is of benefit to our students.

Our school 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 school 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

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school 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 we may use external agencies or speakers to facilitate and support this.

Therefore, by delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, we will strive to ensure our students recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help students develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

Frensham has an External Visitors Checklist which should be used to ensure speakers are appropriate (Staff Handbook Section 3.30)

Risk reduction

The school will take reasonable measures, such as seeking feedback from previous schools/audiences, asking for multimedia/PowerPoint material to be used in advance and ensuring clear awareness of audience age and prior experiences, to ensure that visitors and volunteers do not deliver messages of extremism or radicalisation.

The staff member arranging any visiting speaker that could, in some way, be connected to radicalisation, will alert the Head of Horizons (PSHE) and Head of Human Perspectives so that additional support, information or discussion can take place if a visiting speaker strays from the agreed content. The school acknowledges that there is a risk with any visiting speaker, and therefore the Horizons team are well briefed on intended speakers.

Response

The DSL takes the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. This involves ensuring that staff are all trained every two years in their duties in regards to the government's Prevent strategy.

Staff at Frensham Heights 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 in Frensham (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 or if they have concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism. They should speak with the DSL, Jack Talman. **Disclosures should be reported without delay in line with guidance in our safeguarding policy.**

Appendix 1

The government's definition of extremism was updated in 2024 as follows:

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation may include:

- Identity Crisis – the student / student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
- Personal Crisis – the student / 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; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student / 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;
- Unmet Aspirations – the student / student may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / re-integration;
- Special Educational Need – students / 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; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.