



# THAMES LEARNING TRUST

Name of Policy	Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
Scope of Policy	This policy relates to all academies across The Thames Learning Trust.
Approved by	Chief Executive
Date of Approval	March 2024
Review period	Three Years
Review Date	March 2027

GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER



# THAMES LEARNING TRUST

## Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

### 1. Introduction

The Thames Learning Trust is committed to providing a secure environment for students, where children feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at our Schools 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.

In adhering to this policy, and the procedures therein, staff and visitors will contribute to each school's delivery of the outcomes to all children, as set out in s10 (2) of the Children Act 2004\*. This Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy is one element within our overall Trust arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of all Children in line with our statutory duties set out in s175 of the Education Act 2002.

The aim of this policy is to outline our approach to supporting the national 'Prevent' Agenda linked to the safeguarding of our learners and staff. This policy is written with reference to the Prevent Duty contained within Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Duty states that specified authorities, including schools, in the exercise of their functions must have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

Prevent is 1 of the 4 elements of 'CONTEST', the government's counter-terrorism strategy. The 4 elements are: Pursue, Protect, Prepare and Prevent. It aims to stop people becoming involved in violent extremism.

Each school's Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy also draws upon the guidance contained in DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023"; and specifically DCSF Resources "Learning Together to be Safe", "Prevent: Resources Guide", "Tackling Extremism in the UK".

*\* the physical, mental health and emotional well-being of children; the protection of children from harm and neglect; the education, training and recreation of children; the contribution made by them to society; and their social and economic well-being.*

### 2. Ethos and Practice

When operating this policy The Thames Learning Trust uses the following accepted Governmental definition of extremism (March 2024) which is:

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).

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our schools, whether from internal sources — students, staff or trustees, or external sources - community, external agencies or

individuals. Our students see our schools as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this — we have a duty to ensure this happens.

As a trust 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 Pupils and 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 The Thames Learning Trust, our Schools will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our pupils and students are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalized.

Furthermore, at The Thames Learning Trust 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 or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour and Discipline Policy for pupils and students and the Code of Conduct for staff. 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 a Prohibition Order is warranted.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities, Trust 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 art work 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;
- Partner schools, local authority services, 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, 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 Trust will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board agreed processes and criteria for safeguarding individuals susceptible to extremism and radicalisation.

At The Thames Learning Trust, we have determined "British Values" to be:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

As a Trust we aim to develop and nurture these by:

- Planning a vibrant, engaging assembly programme with core ethical values and beliefs at its heart
- A well-structured Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship education programme which addresses all of the requirements of the programmes of study (looking at Democracy, Freedom, the rule of law, Human Rights and responsibilities)
- A strong Religious Studies and Ethics programme at every Key Stage
- Effective and well-managed Pupil and Student Voice enabling students to actively participate in the democratic process
- A broad and balanced curriculum which addresses many of these core values across a range of subject areas
- Having a clearly communicated and consistently applied Behaviour Policy so that students understand what is expected of them and the consequences of both meeting and failing to meet these expectations
- A Code of Conduct which is regularly referred to and communicated with students, reiterating that we are a community built on mutual respect and understanding
- Adopting restorative approaches, where possible, to resolve any difficulties between members of our community
- Having a rigorous commitment to student safety (for example: Educational visits policy and procedures, Safeguarding procedures, Code of Conduct and Health and Safety procedures)

### **3. 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 each of our schools this will be achieved by good teaching, primarily via PSHE. We will ensure that all of 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 of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it.

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 a curriculum that includes:

- Democracy programmes;
- Open discussion and debate;
- Work on anti-violence and a restorative approach addressed throughout curriculum and the behaviour policy;
- Focussed educational programmes through PHCSE

We will also work with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to ensure that each of our schools understand and embrace their local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our students' experiences and horizons.

We will help support students who may be susceptible 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 trust will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

At The Thames Learning Trust we will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. In our schools, 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.

#### **4. Use of External Agencies and Speakers**

At The Thames Learning Trust 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.

When invited into one of our schools, we will make sure that any external speakers are supervised at all times.

These external agencies will be vetted 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 individual 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 students.

Our schools will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- Any messages communicated to students 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 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;

- Activities are carefully evaluated by schools to ensure that they are effective.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our Trust is to encourage pupils and 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 and enrichment programme 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 pupils and students develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

## **5. Risk assessment**

Prevent Risk Assessment - The Prevent Duty Guidance requires all relevant institutions to conduct a regularly reviewed Prevent Risk Assessment and associated Action Plan.

- Each School's Risk Assessment and action plan is available on the shared drive for staff.
- A summary of the Risk Assessment and Action Plan will be reported annually
- Activities and events which may pose a risk of radicalisation, including the presence of visiting speakers and the possible letting of school premises to outside groups, will be risk assessed using the school protocol.

## **6. Whistle Blowing**

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation, Pupils and Students, Staff and Trustees in every school will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to Whistle Blow or raise any issue in confidence.

They must inform the Principal straight away (or if it relates to the Principal inform the Trust CEO).

## **7. Safeguarding**

Please refer to the individual school's Safeguarding Policy for the full procedural framework on our Safeguarding and Child Protection duties.

Staff at The Thames Learning Trust 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 The Thames Learning Trust (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 Lead or Principal.

At The Thames Learning Trust our Safeguarding reporting arrangements are set out fully in each school's Safeguarding Policy.

## **8. Role of Board of Trustees**

The Trust Board will undertake appropriate training to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibilities as members of the Trust Board, including their statutory safeguarding duties.

The Trust Board will support the ethos and values of our schools and will support each school in tackling extremism and radicalisation.

In line with the provisions set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023' the Trust Board will challenge the school's senior management team on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness.