Joseph Leckie Academy

Anti-Radicalisation Policy Safeguarding Students Who Are Vulnerable To Extremism

Approved by Governors
14/02/2018

Policy Statement

Joseph Leckie Academy is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. As an Academy we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability.

The Anti-radicalisation policy includes the Counter Terrorism Strategy 'CONTEST'. There are four areas: **Pursue** – to stop terrorism attacks; **Prevent** – to stop people becoming terrorists or supplying terrorists; **Protest** – to strengthen our protection against terrorist attacks; **Prepare** – to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack. This policy also sets out our beliefs, strategies and procedures to protect vulnerable individuals from being radicalised or exposed to extremism, by identifying who they are and providing them with support.

General Statement

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. There have been several occasions 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.

Our aim

Joseph Leckie Academy values freedom of speech and the expansion of beliefs / philosophy 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.

Risk

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Joseph Leckie Academy is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Definitions

Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalization, Joseph Leckie Academy seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist beliefs, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Risk reduction

The Principal, Governors and the Designated Safeguarding Person will assess the level of risk within the Academy and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the Academy's RE curriculum, SEND policy, assembly policy, the use of Academy premises by external agencies, integration of students by gender and SEN, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the Academy's profile, community and philosophy.

Response: Designated Person

Our Academy, like all others, is required to identify a 'Prevent Single Point of Contact' who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the Academy Principal.

When any member of staff has concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the Principal.

Response:

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities Academy 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 Academies, 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, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others Anti-Western or Anti-British views

Interventions

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

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. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;

Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;

Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

There is no such thing as a "typical extremist": those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Students may become vulnerable to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that Academy staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

Identity Crisis – the student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;

Personal Crisis – the 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'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 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 / reintegration;

*Special Educational Need*s – 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;

Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour;

Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and /or personal crisis.

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 at our Academy and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our students are safe from harm.

The principle objectives are that:

All governors, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism are and why we need to be vigilant in the Academy.

All governors, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will know what the Academy's policy is on anti -radicalisation and extremism and will follow the policy when issues arise.

All parents and students will know that the Academy has policies in place to keep students safe from harm and that the Academy regularly reviews its systems to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

The Academy's curriculum 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.

Our SMSC provision is embedded across the curriculum, and underpins the ethos of the Academy. It is recognised that students with low aspirations are more vulnerable to radicalisation and therefore we strive to equip our students with confidence, self-belief, respect and tolerance as well as setting high standards and expectations for themselves.

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. Inappropriate websites are banned and cannot be accessed from Academy premises.

Procedures for referrals

It is important for all staff to be constantly vigilant and remain fully informed about the issues which affect Joseph Leckie Academy and the communities we serve.

Staff are reminded to suspend any 'professional disbelief' that instances of radicalisation 'could not happen here' and to refer any concerns through the appropriate channels.

(see appendix 1 – Dealing with referrals)

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 staff to refer concerns about individuals and groups. We must have the confidence to challenge, to intervene and ensure that we have strong safeguarding practices.

The Principal/ DSP/Leadership Team will discuss 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)

Governing Body

The Board of Governors will undertake appropriate training to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibilities as Governors, including their statutory safeguarding duties. The Board of Governors will support the Academy in tackling extremism and radicalisation.

Staff Training

Through INSET opportunities in the Academy, we will ensure that all staff are fully aware of the threats, risks and vulnerabilities that are linked to radicalisation; are aware of the process of radicalisation and how this might be identified promptly.

Links to other policies

The Academy Anti-Radicalisation policy statement links to the following policies: Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Anti-bullying Policy and Positive Behaviour Policy.

Review

The Anti-Radicalisation Policy will be reviewed annually as part of the overall Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy review.

Appendix 1 – Dealing with referrals

We are aware of the potential indicators that a student 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

- personal or political grievances

In the event of prejudicial behaviour:

All incidents of prejudicial behaviour will be reported directly to the Principal or in his absence to a member of the Leadership Team.

All incidents will be fully investigated and recorded in the Prejudicial Incidents and Referrals folder which will be kept with Jayne Jackson (Principal's PA).

Parents are 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 is kept alongside the initial referral in the Prejudicial Incidents folder.

The Principal/DSP/Leadership team 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. A further meeting with parents would be held if there is not a significant positive change in behaviour. If deemed necessary in the event of a referral relating to serious concerns about potential radicalisation or extremism, the Academy will contact West Midlands Police and Walsall Children's Services.

In conclusion we will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority and criteria for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

Additional materials

Prevent strategy, GOV.UK – Home Office (Adobe pdf file)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

Learning Together to be Safe: a Toolkit to Help Schools Contribute to the Prevention of Violent Extremism was published in 2008 by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), a predecessor of the Department for Education.