

Sophia HIGH SCHOOL

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy 2026 - 2027

Ownership & Consultation	
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Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

KEY FACTS:

- Pupils who attend our school have the right to learn in an open, tolerant and safe environment.
- The School currently assesses the risk of radicalisation to be [low/medium/high]. The School carries out annual risk assessments to measure the nature and level of risks associated with radicalisation.
- The School will implement prevention measures such as applying appropriate restrictions to internet sites likely to promote terrorist materials and discussing these dangers with pupils.
- All concerns relating to radicalisation should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or in their absence to the Deputy DSL.
- The DSL will discuss all concerns relating to the radicalisation of a pupil with the Executive Principal and the local safeguarding partners and relevant agencies so that appropriate action can be taken to and appropriate referrals, including to the Channel programme, can be made.
- Where a child is at risk of immediate serious harm a referral will be made to children's social care immediately.
- The DSL will work in partnership with the local safeguarding partners and relevant agencies over all matters covered in this policy, including those relating to the prevention and identification of risk and to the handling of concerns.

1 Purpose

1.1. This "Preventing Radicalisation Policy" is part of our commitment to keeping children safe. Since the "Education and Inspections Act 2006", schools have a duty to promote community cohesion. Over the last few years, global events have led to a growth of extremist viewpoints, including advocacy of violent extremism.

The objectives of Prevent are:

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

1.2. Schools have an important part to play in both educating children and young people about extremism and recognising when pupils start to become radicalised. From 1 July 2015, schools became subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ("CTSA 2015") in exercising their functions "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism."

1.3. The duty to prevent children and young people being radicalised is set out in the following documents:

- Counter Terrorism & Security Act (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a4cf903b7203c4c023fd2f3/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2026_.pdf (September 2026 version)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69fb1c28d0e316a40f269a5b/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2026_a_guide_to_multi_agency_working.pdf
- Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (Updated March 2024)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e5a5bd3f69457ff1035fe2/14.258_HO_Prevent+Duty+Guidance_v5d_Final_Web_1_.pdf
- The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders (June 2015)
- The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)
- Non-statutory guidance
- Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools: Departmental advice for maintained schools (DfE Nov 2014)
- Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils: supplementary information (DfE 2014)
- How Social Media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq (Home Office)

2 Ethos

2.1. We ensure that through our school vision, values, rules, diverse curriculum and teaching, we promote tolerance and respect for all cultures, faiths and lifestyles. The Education Team ensures that this ethos is reflected and implemented effectively in school policy and practice and that there are effective risk assessments in place to safeguard and promote students' welfare.

Our families come from around the world and follow many faiths, so discrimination between strict religious observance and radicalisation is important for all staff to know, understand and apply in their daily practice. There is a degree of sensitivity which needs to be shown when dealing with students and families from diverse backgrounds.

2.2. Safeguarding children from all risks of harm is an important part of a school's work and protecting them from extremism is one aspect of that. Radicalisation is a safeguarding issue and should be considered alongside other forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm. Concerns should be assessed using the same child-centred safeguarding approach applied to all other welfare concerns.

3. Risk Assessment

3.1 Following annual review, the School currently assesses the risk of radicalisation as **medium**, reflecting the nature of a fully online international learning environment and the potential exposure of students to online communities and digital platforms.

4. Responsibilities and Training

4.1 The school will:

4.1.1 ensure that this policy is understood and effectively implemented by staff throughout the School;

4.1.2 ensure that the DSL and every member of staff undergoes appropriate Prevent Duty Training which is refreshed regularly and supplemented by safeguarding and Prevent updates throughout the year and

4.1.3 ensure that the School's Prevent policies and procedures and general safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of safeguarding partners and relevant agencies

4.2 The DSL will:

4.2.1 be the single point of contact to oversee and coordinate the school's implementation of the Prevent Duty;

4.2.2 undertake prevent awareness training, such as the on-line general awareness training module on Channel - WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent);

4.2.3 provide Prevent Duty training to all staff so that they (a) understand the general risks affecting pupils at the School; (b) are able to identify individual children who might be at risk of radicalisation; and (c) know what to do to support these children;

4.2.4 provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation;

4.2.5 receive safeguarding concerns about children and young people who may be susceptible;

4.3 All staff will:

4.3.1 undergo regular Prevent Duty training (including Channel online awareness training and additional training provided by the school) so that staff have the knowledge and confidence to be able to (a) understand the general risks of radicalisation affecting pupils at the School; (b) identify individual children who might be at risk of radicalisation (see Point 8 below) and spot signs of extremism (see Point 9 below); (c) challenge extremist views; and (d) provide appropriate advice to children who are at risk of radicalisation.

4.3.2 be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

4.3.3 use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

5. Supervision of Breakout Rooms and Collaborative Online Learning

Breakout rooms are an integral part of the school's delivery model, enabling paired and small-group collaborative work in line with the pedagogy of the Online Learning Policy. The school's approach to safeguarding within breakout rooms **follows the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education: supervision that is reasonable, proportionate and appropriate to the setting, rather than continuous surveillance of every pupil interaction — the same standard that applies to group work, corridors and shared spaces in a physical school.**

The following controls apply whenever breakout rooms are in use:

- The class teacher retains host control of the whole session at all times, remains present in the lesson throughout, and moves between breakout rooms on an unannounced basis, as a teacher would circulate between groups in a physical classroom.
- Breakout groups are kept deliberately small, consistent with the school's small-group model.
- Every pupil retains an immediate exit at all times: any pupil may leave a breakout room and return to the main room, or leave the lesson entirely, at any moment. Pupils learn from home, with a parent or carer contactable as set out in the Online Learning Policy.
- All pupils are taught, and sign an age-appropriate Digital Safety Agreement committing to, the expectation that they report immediately to an adult anything that makes them uncomfortable, in a breakout room or anywhere else online. The school's behaviour and anti-bullying expectations apply in breakout rooms exactly as they do in the main classroom and in a physical school.
- Concerns raised about conduct in breakout rooms — by a pupil, parent or member of staff — are followed up promptly under the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Behaviour Policy, and grouping arrangements may be adjusted while any concern is looked into.
- Structured weekly parent contact provides a regular, reliable route through which concerns about peer interactions are surfaced and acted upon.

The school keeps this model under review as part of its annual policy cycle and its ongoing risk assessment of remote learning.

6. Referral Process

5.1 All staff must refer all concerns about children and young people who show signs of vulnerability to radicalisation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or in their absence to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL). For further details about safeguarding referrals please see the School's separate policy entitled Safeguarding: Child Protection Procedures.

5.2 If the DSL becomes aware of a concern relating to the radicalisation of a pupil he or she will discuss this with the Executive Principal and the local safeguarding partners and relevant agencies so that appropriate actions can be taken to safeguard the pupil and appropriate referrals, including to the Channel programme, can be made.

7. Curriculum

7.1 We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain and as Global Citizens. We encourage our pupils to be inquisitive learners who are open to new experiences and are tolerant of others.

7.2 Our values support the development of the whole child as a reflective learner within a calm, caring, happy and purposeful atmosphere. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society;

7.3 We aim to provide a safe space in which pupils can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to be able to challenge extremist views.

7.4 We will include opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to build resilience to pressure and to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and radicalisation.

8. Internet Safety

8.1 The internet provides children and young people with access to a wide-range of content, some of which is harmful. Extremists use the internet, including social media, to share their messages. The filtering systems used in our school blocks inappropriate content, including extremist content.

8.2 Pupils will be taught how to stay safe online, both in school and outside school. They will be taught to understand the risks posed by adults or young people who use the internet and social media to groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and susceptible adults. All pupils and parents have access to regular, updated information and workshops related to Keeping Safe Online, including how to screen and block online content at home.

8.3 The school uses appropriate monitoring and filtering systems to identify safeguarding concerns, including concerns relating to extremism, radicalisation and online harm. Parents are provided with annual online safeguarding and digital safety training by the Technology team to share how they can safeguard students at home via their home networks.

8.4 Where staff, students or visitors find extremist content in the Google Classroom work space or pick up with concerns via conversations with students, they must report it to the DSL who will in turn discuss it with the Executive Principal or CEO.

8.5 We are aware that children and young people have access to unfiltered internet when using their mobile phones and home devices and staff are alert to the need for vigilance when pupils are using their phones during online lessons. Students participating in online gaming, Esports activities and associated digital communities are taught how to recognise, avoid and report extremist content, harmful ideologies and inappropriate online interactions.

8.6 The School recognises that extremist and harmful ideologies may be encountered through gaming platforms, livestreaming services, social media, messaging applications, online forums and AI-enabled technologies. Staff remain vigilant to these risks and concerns will be managed through the School's safeguarding and Prevent procedures. Pupils will also be taught to critically evaluate content shared by online influencers and content creators, recognising that harmful, extremist, misogynistic or discriminatory views may be presented in ways that appear credible or appealing.

9. Signs of Susceptibility

There are no known definitive indicators that a young person is susceptible to radicalisation. Vulnerability to radicalisation is complex and no single factor indicates that a child is being radicalised. Staff should consider concerns in context and avoid making assumptions based on faith, ethnicity, nationality, disability, gender identity or personal beliefs. There are a number of factors which, when considered together, may increase vulnerability. Staff should maintain the attitude that radicalisation could occur within any community and should avoid making assumptions based on a child's background, culture, faith, ethnicity, nationality, disability, gender identity or personal circumstances. Concerns should be assessed on the basis of behaviours, vulnerability factors and available evidence.

Signs of susceptibility may include:

- underachievement
- being in possession of extremist literature;
- poverty;
- social exclusion
- traumatic events
- global or national events
- Sudden changes in beliefs, associations or behaviours that cause safeguarding concern
- change in behaviour
- extremist influences;
- conflict with family over lifestyle;
- confused identity;
- victim or witness to race or hate crimes; and
- rejection by peers, family, social groups or faith.

10. Recognising Extremist

A part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities to identify signs of abuse we will be alert to early indicators of radicalisation or extremism which may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes;
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures;
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school;
- evidence of possession of illegal or extremist literature;
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups;
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent);
- secretive behaviour;
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles;
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality;
- engagement with online communities promoting misogyny, violence against women and girls, hatred, discrimination or other harmful extremist narratives;
- graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes;
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others;
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views;
- advocating violence towards others

11. Channel

11.1 Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be susceptible to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

11.2 Section 36 of the CTSA 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must be chaired by the local authority and include the police for the relevant local authority area. Following a referral the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are susceptible to being drawn into terrorism, and, where considered appropriate and necessary, consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals.

11.3 Section 38 of the CTSA 2015 requires partners of Channel panels (including proprietors of independent schools) to cooperate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in providing information about a referred individual.

11.4 Guidance issued under section 36(7) and section 38 (6) of the CTSA 2015 in respect of Channel (Revised April 2025) is available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/651e71d9e4e658001459d997/14.320_HO_Channel_Duty_Guidance_v3_Final_Web.pdf

12 Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Education and Safeguarding team annually