

Ysgol Aberconwy



Preventing Extremism **and Radicalisation**

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THIS POLICY HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Signed:

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PREVENTING EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION POLICY

Parents will be issued with a hard copy of this policy on request. This policy will also be made available to parents via the school website. The Governing Body will actively evaluate the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring staff understanding and application of the procedures within this policy as per our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Context

Ysgol Aberconwy values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society. Both students and staff have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, with freedom comes the responsibility not to manipulate the vulnerable and promote ideas that lead to violence and harm of others.

The current threat from violent extremism and terrorism in the UK can involve the exploitation of vulnerable people including children, young people and vulnerable adults to involve them in activity in support of violent extremism or terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. We are clear that this exploitation which can lead to radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Ysgol Aberconwy is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils, staff, governors and the wider community where people feel safe and are kept safe. All staff and volunteers working here 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.

The Prevent Duty

Under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 the school has a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. For schools this means:

- Teaching a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- Providing safe spaces in which students can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues
- protect students from extremism and the risk of radicalisation in the same way as they protect them from other forms of harm and abuse.

This policy is one element within our overall school arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in line with our statutory duties and should be read in conjunction with the school Safeguarding Policy.

Ethos and Practice

When operating this policy Ysgol Aberconwy uses 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 school, whether from internal sources: pupils, staff or governors, or external sources: school community, external agencies or individuals.

Ysgol Aberconwy wants pupils see the school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely 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 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.

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 by equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our pupils are enriched, they understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised. Furthermore, at Ysgol Aberconwy 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 pupils 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 pupils or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct for pupils and the Code of Conduct for staff.

Risk Reduction

Governors, SLT and the Designated Safeguarding Leads will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce the risk. This will include consideration of the school’s curriculum and policies (for example Anti bullying policy)

Role of Governing Body

The Governing Body of our School 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.
- support the ethos and values of our school and will support the school in tackling extremism and radicalisation.
- challenge the school's senior management team on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness.
- review this policy regularly (every 2 years) and may amend and adopt it outside of this timeframe in accordance with any new legislation or guidance or in response to any quality assurance recommendations pertaining to the delivery of this policy and our overall safeguarding arrangements.

Details of our Governing Body will be published on our school website to promote transparency.

Role of the Headteacher:

The Headteacher will

- ensure the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead includes the responsibility to deliver the PREVENT strategy and sufficient training is provided for them to carry out their role
- ensure that students are provided with opportunities to learn about radicalisation and extremism and develop resilience
- ensure that the school upholds and actively promotes British Values
- provide regular feedback to the Governing body on the implementation of this policy

Role of the Designated Safeguarding lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the focus person and local 'expert' for school staff, and others, who may have concerns about an individual child's safety or well-being and is the first point of contact for external agencies. Their role includes the responsibilities of the PREVENT strand of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy including the provision of training and updates to school staff, Governors and volunteers and liaison with North Wales Police Prevent team.

The Role of all Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers will:

- undertake training as required
- raise any concerns regarding a student or colleague in accordance with school procedure.

Safeguarding

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

- Disclosures by pupils of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups.
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Pupils 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 pupils in other schools or settings
- Pupils 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, transphobia, race, colour or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views

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

Child Protection

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

Staff 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 Ysgol Aberconwy, 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 Headteacher.

Referring Concerns

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation parents, pupils and staff will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to raise any issue in confidence with senior management.

Our lead person for Prevent is the Designated Safeguarding Lead who would normally be the first point of contact should there be any concerns. The Designated Safeguarding lead will follow the school safeguarding procedure to refer any concerns. Additional advice can be obtained from the North Wales Police Prevent team where necessary.

If for any reason making a referral to the Designated Safeguarding lead creates a difficulty for the referrer, they can contact the Headteacher.

Contact details can be found at the end of this policy document

Teaching Approaches

We will:

- 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 via PSHE lessons
- ensure that our teaching approaches help our pupils build resilience to extremism and give pupils a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. Our aim is that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it
- 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 pupil's experiences and horizons.
- help support pupils who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a pupil is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences we will seek advice from North Wales Police Prevent Officers and/ or Local Authority Safeguarding Officers.
- promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.
- teach and encourage pupils to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith.
- fulfil our most fundamental responsibility which is to keep our pupils safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and the wider international community.

Use of External Agencies and Speakers

At Ysgol Aberconwy we encourage the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our pupils however we will positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences for our pupils. Such vetting is to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the school's values and ethos.

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

- Any messages communicated to pupils 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 pupils through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies
- Activities are properly embedded in the curriculum and clearly mapped to learning plans
- Activities are well-managed, fully supervised and subject to robust safeguarding procedures.
- Activities are matched to the needs of pupils

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

The ethos of our school is to encourage pupils to understand diverse 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 pupils recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves (where appropriate to their age and ability) but also to help pupils develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

Training

All staff, including temporary staff and volunteers will receive an induction with regard to our Safeguarding policy and procedures. This will include information and guidance about our duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Whole school in-service training in regard to safeguarding and child protection will be organised for staff, governors and volunteers at least every 2 years and will comply with the prevailing arrangements approved by North Wales Safeguarding Board and will, in part, include awareness raising on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will attend appropriate and relevant training courses in regard to safeguarding children. This will include accessing training on extremism and radicalization, and its safeguarding implications.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all adults working and volunteering in the school receive appropriate levels of training, guidance and support in regard to safeguarding children from extremism and radicalisation on a regular basis.

Recruitment and staff conduct

With the support of Conwy County Borough Council the arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our school will follow guidance for safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked and that we complete and maintain a single central record of such vetting checks.

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 school so as to unduly influence our school's character and ethos. We are aware that such persons seek to limit the opportunities for our pupils 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 school and staff team we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

Whistleblowing

Staff should refer to the School Whistle Blowing Policy under which they are entitled to employment protection for raising genuine concerns outside of the school environment.

IT policies and Training

Appropriate filters are in place and maintained by Conwy County Borough Council to protect children from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school. The ICT Acceptable User Policy prohibits the access or terrorist and extremist material.

Students are given advice and training on how to stay safe online, both in school and outside of school. Teaching staff are aware of the risks posed by online activity of extremist and terrorist groups and any suspicious online activity will be reported to Mrs Medwen Brookes / Mrs Jessica Meredydd.

Useful Contacts:

- In an emergency call **999**
- National police prevent advice line 0800 011 3764
- Report to the SS duty team: duty@conwy.gov.uk
- Mrs Medwen Brookes 01492 593243 Medwen.brookes@aberconwy.conwy.sch.uk

Useful Documents :

The Prevent Duty : advice for schools and Childcare providers

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

Supplementary guidance: inspecting safeguarding in schools and PRUs (Estyn, 2021)

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/supplementary-guidance/supplementary-guidance-inspecting-safeguarding-schools-and-prus>

Respect and resilience: Developing community cohesion – a common understanding for schools and their communities (2011)

www.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/110209respecten.pdf

Recommended web filtering standards for school in Wales (2018)

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/recommended-web-filtering-standards-for-schools-in-wales.pdf>

Appendix : Definitions

Extremism: The accepted Governmental definition of extremism 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’.

Violent Extremism: Where violence is justified or glorified in furtherance of particular beliefs

Radicalisation: The process that leads people to turn real or perceived grievances into increasingly extreme ideas which may include using violence to further those beliefs

PREVENT: One of the four components that make up the Home Office counter terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism through:

- Challenging violent extremism ideology
- Disrupting those who promote violent extremism
- Supporting vulnerable individuals
- Increasing the resilience of communities to violent extremism
- Addressing the grievances that ideologies are exploiting

Resilience: This is broadly the ability to bounce back from adversity. It is used by educationalists and mental health professionals to describe the process in which people can overcome or resist negative influences that block for example emotional wellbeing and or achievement.

Critical Thinking: The ability to analyse and evaluate information and arguments. It focuses on questioning assumptions and values that underpin statements and conclusions with a view to assessing their validity.