Hillcross Primary School

Statement on Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

Mission, Vision and Culture

At Hillcross we nurture our children to think critically and creatively within a collaborative community.

Our outstanding practice ensures our children meet their full potential, both personally and academically, and provides opportunities for them to develop their unique talents and skills. As a nationally recognized Thinking School, we nurture an empathetic community of creative and critical thinkers. We achieve success for all through our dynamic and ambitious curriculum, inclusive learning, promoting fairness and celebrating diversity. Through our school culture of high aspiration, embracing challenge, acting with compassion, a shared responsibility and by showing respect for all, we aim to develop a resilient school community of compassionate global citizens.

Introduction

The Prevent Duty June 2015, created a new duty on certain bodies to have "DUE REGARD TO THE NEED TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM BEING DRAWN INTO TERRORISM". The duty applies to bodies including local authorities, the police, prisons, probation, schools, colleges and universities. Following an independent review, statutory Prevent Duty guidance from the Home Office came into effect on 31st December 2023 – there are no new legal requirements placed upon educational settings.

Terrorism: The Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000) defines terrorism as 'The use or threat of serious violence against a person or serious damage to property where that action is:

- designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public or a section of the public; and
- for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause.

Radicalisation: is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Schools are in a unique position, through interacting with children on a regular basis, to be able to identify concerning behaviour changes that may indicate they are susceptible to radicalisation. Our staff are not only alert to violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, including certain divisive or intolerant narratives which can reasonably be linked to terrorism.

This statement has been written in response to and in line with the above and forms part of the government's counter terrorism strategy which seeks to:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat faced from those who promote these views
- Provide practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support
- Work with a wide range of sectors where there are risks of radicalisation which need to be addressed, including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, the internet and health

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All schools are required by law to teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral and cultural development of students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. The purpose of the Prevent Strategy statement is to protect students from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and British values. To this end it acts to;

- Raise awareness
- Provide information
- Enable learners to make a positive contribution
- Safeguard young people

Risk

The current threat from extremism and radicalisation in the UK can 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. Hillcross Primary School is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that both Staff and Governors, under their duty of care for students, have explicit responsibilities to safeguard pupils from the risk of falling under the influence of extremist groups and individuals and potentially even being drawn into terrorism.

The ideological component of terrorism is what sets it apart from other acts of serious violence. Islamist ideology is resilient and enduring. Extreme Right-Wing ideology is resurgent. Other ideologies are less present, but still have the potential to motivate, inspire and be used to justify terrorism. A terrorist 'ideology' is a set of beliefs, principles, and objectives to which an individual or group purports to adhere and attempts to instil in others to radicalise them towards becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. There are several concepts or 'tools' that often feature in terrorist and extremist ideologies, including: narrative, propaganda, grievances, and conspiracy theory.

- **Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism (ERWT):** These ideologies can be broadly characterised as Cultural Nationalism, White Nationalism and White Supremacism. Individuals and groups may subscribe to ideological tenets and ideas from more than one category.
- **Islamist Terrorism:** is the threat or use of violence as a means to establish a strict interpretation of an Islamic society. For some this is a political ideology which envisions, for example, the creation of a global Islamic caliphate based on strict implementation of shari'ah law. Many adherents believe that violence (or jihad as they conceive it) is not only a necessary strategic tool to achieve their aims, but an individual's religious duty. In the UK the Islamist terrorist threat comes overwhelmingly from those inspired by, but not necessarily affiliated with, Daesh and/or al-Qa'ida, but they operate within a wider landscape of radicalising influences. Islamist should not be interpreted as a reference to individuals who follow the religion of Islam.
- **Left Wing, Anarchist and Single-Issue Terrorism (LASIT):** Encompasses a wide range of ideologies. It includes those from the extreme political left-wing as well as anarchists who seek to use violence to advance their cause in seeking to overthrow the State in all its forms.
- **Online Radicalisation:** Describes situations where the internet is believed to have played a role in a person's radicalisation pathway. The internet can play two broad roles in radicalisation (offering mechanisms often unavailable to people offline). These are: exposure to extremist and terrorist content and socialisation within 'likeminded' networks. Often this is facilitated by highly permissive environments online.
- **Permissive Environments:** A 'permissive environment' may be characterised as being tolerant of behaviour or practices strongly disapproved of by others, such as an environment where radicalising ideologies are permitted to flourish. Radicalisers create and take advantage of permissive environments to promote or condone violence and to spread harmful ideologies that undermine our values and society. Permissive environments can exist both online and offline. Permissive online environments can contribute to online radicalisation.

- **Susceptibility:** is complex and unique to a person's circumstances. Within Prevent, susceptibility refers to the fact that a person may be likely or liable to be influenced or harmed by terrorist and extremist ideologies that support or radicalise people into terrorism. As set out in the Prevent duty guidance, a person's susceptibility may be linked to their vulnerability (see vulnerability below), but not all people susceptible to radicalisation will be vulnerable. There may be other circumstances, needs or other underlying factors that may make a person susceptible to radicalisation but do not constitute a vulnerability.
- **Vulnerability:** Describes the condition of being in need of special care, support, **or protection because of age**, disability, risk of abuse or neglect.

The Staff are alert to the potential dangers of institutional complacency and/or suspended professional disbelief – 'it could not happen here' – and will put in place strategies to ensure that **governors, staff, parents and pupils understand the potential threat and are aware of the indicators of vulnerability** (see **Appendix 1** below).

In discharging this duty of care, the school seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism delivered using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify political, religious, sexist or racist violence
- Belong to rigid and narrow ideologies that are intolerant of diversity and so leave those who hold them vulnerable to future radicalization
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

What we do to address the risk
At Hillcross, children participate in a curriculum that promotes active learning and develops critical thinking skills. The focus on active learning and questioning enables students to explore social and emotional aspects of learning throughout the curriculum. The school actively promotes diversity and shared values between the school community, the local community, the national community and the global community. We do this by celebrating our own school values, as well as shared British Values. These values form the basis of our children's understanding of wider communities and there are numerous academic and pastoral opportunities that embed this ethos.

We challenge all prejudices, recognising students who are at risk of isolation. The emphasis on pastoral care, the use of agreed policies, school assemblies/collective worship, the PSHE scheme of work, school events and enrichment activities ensure that the school is a safe place to learn and socialise. We seek justice for inappropriate behaviour choices and use restorative approaches to repair harm when caused.

We have a regularly reviewed Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan in place which identifies any further actions that can be taken by the school. Any strategies that are indicated in the light of the risk assessment are actionned as soon as practicably possible.

We undertake a range of activities/initiatives to raise awareness of the issues with both staff and pupils and to ensure that the school community understands what to do and who to go to if they have any concerns around the potential radicalisation of a member of the school community. These are revisited over time and include:

- The Designated Safeguarding Leads attending Prevent Strategy training.
- Staff INSET based on the Prevent Strategy, designed to increase confidence in identifying pupils at risk of being drawn into terrorism, is held at regular intervals and is always included in annual safeguarding update training. We also provide Prevent training for new staff/governors as part of their induction.

- Governors attend Prevent training. This ensures that all staff, governors, pupils and parents are aware of the indicators of vulnerability

- IT filtering systems are used to block users from accessing inappropriate websites.

- A Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) has been identified to take the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. Within Hillcross Primary School this is Mrs Lisa Francis, Headteacher.

- An annually reviewed Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy that takes account of the Prevent Strategy is ratified by the governors and is available on the school website.

- Regular liaison with local organisations and religious leaders to ensure that good partnership links exist and that information is regularly shared.

- British Values are embedded throughout our school curriculum.

- Online Safety lessons both discrete and within other appropriate learning contexts.

- Regular communications with parents about Online Safety and to provide awareness raising to families about Prevent via a leaflet for parents: please click on this link below which will take you to our school website.
  https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/_site/data/files/about%20our%20school/curriculum%20grids/F2DEB642F5B6DDE0267581A7B7617D30.pdf?pid=92

- Foster a climate that ensures that the whole school community takes the threat of radicalisation seriously

Further information:
Please come and talk to the school if you have any concerns or questions about our role in the wider UK PREVENT strategy.

DFE Guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty

Home Office: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We are committed to treating all members of the school community fairly and challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any member of the school community and it helps to promote equality and accessibility at our school. The curriculum is planned to be inclusive and meet the needs and interests of a full range of learners. Activities and resources will be differentiated and adult support used to ensure that children access the curriculum and make the best possible progress.

Safeguarding Commitment

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in line with the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We take seriously our duty of care to our pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism - this includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. We work closely with

social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Radicalisation is recognised as a specific safeguarding issue and is addressed in line with the Government Prevent Strategy and The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

Privacy Policy
Hillcross School is committed to ensuring protection of all personal information that we hold. We recognise our obligations under the GDPR and Data Protection act 2018. Our practice is documented in our Data Protection Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Written: September 2017
Reviewed: Oct 18, Oct 19, Sep 20, Sep 23

Approved by Staff/Parents/Pupils/Governors:

Date of next review: Sep 2024

Appendix 1 - PREVENT: Indicators of Radicalisation

Vulnerability
- **Identity Crisis** - Distance from cultural/ religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them
- **Personal Crisis** – Family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- **Personal Circumstances** – Migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- **Unmet Aspirations** – Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- **Criminality** – Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/ reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups

Access to extremism / extremist influences
- **Is there reason to believe that the child/young person associates with those known to be involved in extremism** - either because they associate directly with known individuals or because they frequent key locations where these individuals are known to operate? (e.g. the child/young person is the partner, spouse, friend or family member of someone believed to be linked with extremist activity)
- **Does the child/young person frequent, or is there evidence to suggest that they are accessing the internet for the purpose of extremist activity?** (e.g. Use of closed network groups, access to or distribution of extremist material, contact associates covertly via Skype/email etc)
- Is there reason to believe that the child/young person has been or is likely to be **involved with extremist/ military training camps/ locations?**
- Is the child/young person known to have possessed or is actively seeking to possess and/ or distribute **extremist literature/ other media material** likely to incite racial/ religious hatred or acts of violence?
- **Does the child/young person sympathise with, or support illegal/illicit groups** e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?
- **Does the child/young person support groups with links to extremist activity but not illegal/illicit** e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?

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Experiences, Behaviours and Influences
- Has the child/ young person encountered peer, social, family or faith group **rejection**?
- Is there evidence of **extremist ideological, political or religious influence** on the child/ young person from within or outside the UK?
- Have international events in areas of conflict and civil unrest had a **personal impact** on the child/ young person resulting in a noticeable change in behaviour? It is important to recognise that many people may be emotionally affected by the plight of what is happening in areas of conflict (i.e. images of children dying) it is important to differentiate them from those that sympathise with or support extremist activity
- **Has there been a significant shift in the child/ young person's behaviour or outward appearance that suggests a new social/political or religious influence?**
- Has the child/ young person come into **conflict with family over religious beliefs/lifestyle/ dress choices**?
- Does the child/ young person **vocally support** terrorist attacks; either verbally or in their written work?
- Has the child/ young person **witnessed or been the perpetrator/ victim of racial or religious hate crime** or sectarianism?

Travel
- Is there a **pattern** of regular or extended travel within the UK, with other evidence to suggest this is for purposes of extremist training or activity?
- Has the child/ young person **travelled for extended periods of time** to international locations known to be associated with extremism?
- Has the child/ young person employed any methods to **disguise their true identity**? Has the child/ young person used documents or cover to support this?

Social Factors
- Does the child/ young person have experience of poverty, disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion?
- Does the child/ young person experience a lack of meaningful employment appropriate to their skills?
- Does the child/ young person display a lack of affinity or understanding for others, or social isolation from peer groups?
- Does the child/ young person demonstrate identity conflict and confusion normally associated with youth development?
- Does the child/ young person have any learning difficulties/ mental health support needs?
- Does the child/ young person demonstrate a simplistic or flawed understanding of religion or politics?
- Does the child/ young person have a history of crime, including episodes in prison?
- Is the child/young person a foreign national, refugee or awaiting a decision on their immigration/ national status?
- Does the child/ young person have insecure, conflicted or absent family relationships?
- Has the child/ young person experienced any trauma in their lives, particularly any trauma associated with war or sectarian conflict?
- Is there evidence that a significant adult or other in the child/young person's life has extremist view or sympathies?

More critical risk factors could include:-
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Articulating support for extremist causes or leaders
- Accessing extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour

If you have any concerns discuss them with your Designated Safeguarding Lead and local Prevent Officer.