

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

Introduction

Little Acorns Montessori is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils, where children feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at Little Acorns Montessori 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 Little Acorns Montessori's delivery of the outcomes to all children, as set out in s10 (2) of the Children Act 2004. This Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy is one element within our overall school arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of all Children in line with our statutory duties set out at s175 of the Education Act 2002

Our Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy also draws upon the guidance contained in the "London Child Protection Procedures" and DfES Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2015"; and specifically DCSF Resources "Learning Together to be Safe", "Prevent: Resources Guide", "Tackling Extremism in the UK", DE's "Teaching Approaches that help Build Resilience to Extremism among Young People" and Peter Clarke's Report of July 2014.

1 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.

School Ethos and Practice

When operating this policy Little Acorns Montessori 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. Our children see our school 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.

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

Therefore, at Little Acorns Montessori we will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our pupils are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalized.

Furthermore, at Little Acorns Montessori 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 children 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 children or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour for Learning Policy for pupils and the Code of Conduct for staff.

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

- Disclosures by children 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 children have not actively sought these out.
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Children 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
- Children 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

Little Acorns will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority and/Bracknell's Safeguarding Children Board's agreed processes and criteria for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

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 our school this will be achieved by good teaching and by adopting the methods outlined in the Government's guidance 'Teaching approaches that help build resilience to extremism among young people' DfE 2011.

We will ensure that all our teaching approaches help our children build resilience to extremism and give children 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.

We will be flexible enough to adapt our teaching approaches, as appropriate, so as to address specific issues so as to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation.

This approach will be embedded within the ethos of our school so that children know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation. This will work in conjunction with our school's approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils as defined in OfSTED's School Inspection Handbook and will include the sound use of assemblies to help further promote this rounded development of our pupils.

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 help support children who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a child is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences we will ensure that that child is offered mentoring. Additionally, in such instances our school will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

At Little Acorns Montessori we will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We will teach and encourage children 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 children safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school is to encourage children 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, augmented using external sources where appropriate, we will strive to ensure our children recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help children develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

Whistle Blowing

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation children and Staff will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to Whistle Blow or raise any issue in confidence. See Whistleblowing Policy

Child Protection/Safeguarding

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

Staff at Little Acorns Montessori 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 Little Acorns Montessori (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.

Training

Training on Safeguarding and Child Protection will be organised for staff at least every three years and will comply with the prevailing arrangements agreed by the Local Authority and Bracknell's Safeguarding Children Board and will, in part, include training on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will attend training courses as necessary. This will include training on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications.

Recruitment

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 schools 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.

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.

Referral Process

Staff and visitors to the school must refer all concerns about children and young people who show signs of vulnerability or radicalisation must be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead using the usual methods for reporting other safeguarding concerns.

When there are significant concerns about a pupil, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a referral to the appropriate body.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored annually.

This is not a statutory policy and will be reviewed at an appropriate time not later than two years after ratification by the governing body.

See Also: Whistleblowing Policy, Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy, Safer Recruitment Policy