



Elements

Diocesan Learning Trust

Flourishing together, in the love of God.

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy



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1. Vision

Our vision has been developed to enable the coming together of like-minded Primary Schools in Dudley – schools that are separate, discrete **elements** that choose to coalesce as a cohesive whole to speak with one shared voice in education within the Borough of Dudley. Each person in these school communities, children, and adults alike, are also **elements** in bringing to fruition an education that enables their own flourishing and that of others. They are unique individuals, each with their own agency and characteristics, but who have an exponential effect when working together with a shared vision and purpose.

This is the vision in which the headteachers, governors and wider stakeholders have placed their trust and it is essential that it is upheld at every stage.

Each school, despite sharing some similarities, has its own unique context, community, culture, ethos, vision, and values. These will be honoured at all times as part of Elements Diocesan Learning Trust.

The vision is deeply rooted in, and is an outworking of, the Church of England's Vision for Education. Elements Diocesan Learning Trust is committed in being 'Deeply Christian: Serving the Common Good', inspired by the particular scripture in John 10:10 where Jesus declares *'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full'*. These words, combined with the vision's four main guiding **elements** - educating for Wisdom, Knowledge & Skills; Hope & Aspiration; Community & Living Well Together; and Dignity & Respect form the core vision for Elements Diocesan Learning Trust. At times, it is expected that interpretation of what the vision means in practice will vary between individuals and that there will be differences of opinion. At such times, discussion around decisions and actions will be respectful, honouring the four strands of the vision itself and remembering the original reasons for this collaboration.

These core **elements** of the Church of England's Vision for Education have supported the formation of our founding core values.

2. Our values

- **Wisdom** – The decisions we take are wise and are based on informed discussions and evidence and aimed at ensuring we achieve the best outcomes for all without forsaking our values
- **Hope** – we have hope for a positive future and always finding positive outcomes
- **Honesty** – we are honest with all inside and outside our organisation, whilst being sensitive to how we deliver these messages
- **Community and Helpfulness** – we work in co-operation and partnership with all staff and wider stakeholders

- **Dignity and Compassion** – we treat all those within and outside our organisation with dignity, irrespective of the circumstances, and we show everyone compassion for the difficulties that they are experiencing
- **Respect** – we are respectful to all, dedicated to ensuring inclusivity and diversity with those that we work with and for others that meet, and our actions may affect.
- **Integrity** – we have strong principles rooted in our Christian mission that lead our actions and decisions

3. Policy Statement

- a. The Elements Diocesan Learning Trust is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all the pupils and staff within the academy trust, including protecting them from the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation of any form.
- b. The Elements Diocesan Learning Trust is fully committed to promoting respect, tolerance and diversity for all, regardless of their culture or religion and for preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of life.
- c. The Elements Diocesan Learning Trust values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology 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.
- d. The Elements Diocesan Learning Trust believes that everyone working within the academy trust has a duty to recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability, such as drugs or alcohol, in today's society.
- e. The Elements Diocesan Learning Trust recognises the challenges posed to pupils within our Trust from a number of different sources including Al Qaida influenced groups, dissident Irish Republican terrorist groups and UK-based extremist groups including racists or fascist organisations and far-right extremist groups which all pose a threat to public order and British multi-cultural way of life.
- f. The Elements Diocesan Learning Trust expects that everyone working within the academy trust will create an environment of openness and tolerance and support pupils to have a balanced view of the world; including ensuring pupils do not become phobic against certain groups or religions. They have a duty to ensure the fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, ability and disability.

- g. The Elements Diocesan Learning Trust requires members of the academy trust to suspend any 'professional disbelief' that instances of radicalisation 'could not happen here' and be aware that radicalisation and extremism can occur in all religions, cultures and communities.
- h. The Elements Diocesan Learning Trust's Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy draws upon DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023" and HM Government document "Prevent Strategy: A guide for local partners in England".

4. Definitions and Indicators

- a. Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views, to include; 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.
- b. Radicalisation is defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.
- c. There are a number of behaviours which may indicate a child is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extreme views. These include:
 - Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists.
 - Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group.
 - Day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause.
 - Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause.
 - Possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause.
 - Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause.
 - Communications with others that suggests identification with a group, cause or ideology.
 - Using insulting or derogatory names for another group.
 - Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person – these may include:
 - Physical or verbal assault
 - Provocative behaviour
 - Damage to property

- Derogatory name calling
- Possession of prejudice-related materials
- Prejudice related ridicule or name calling
- Inappropriate forms of address
- Refusal to co-operate
- Attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations
- Condoning or supporting violence towards others

5. Trust Ethos and Practice

- a. There is no place for extremist views of any kind in Elements Diocesan Learning Trust schools, whether from internal sources – pupils, staff or governors – or external sources – school community, external agencies or individuals. Our pupils see their 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.
- b. As a Trust, 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.
- c. 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, each Trust school 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 are not marginalized.
- d. All members of the academy trust should therefore strive to equip pupils with confidence, self-belief, respect and tolerance as well as setting high standards and expectations for themselves.
- e. Staff must be vigilant to signs of pupils who may have been subjected to radical or extremist views and must report any concerns immediately to the Headteacher, and/or person responsible for Safeguarding at the school, and/or to the CEO of the Trust.
- f. Every school must provide a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral and cultural development of all pupils. Pupils should be encouraged to share their views and recognise that they are entitled to have their own beliefs which should not be used to influence others.

- g. Radicalisation and extremism should not be considered in isolation, but an awareness should be embedded throughout other areas of the academy trust such as:
- Online safety – pupils should be taught the importance of staying safe online, recognising people are not always who they say they are and be given the skills to protect themselves from inappropriate material on-line.
 - Anti-bullying and acceptable behaviour policies - for both adults and children.
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures.
 - Equality schemes and policies.
 - PSHE / Religious Education lessons.
 - Ensuring a balanced representation of views is presented during discussions and lessons, particularly if the discussions is of a political nature.
 - Ensuring the school letting policy sets out the values of the school and make it clear that any groups not adhering to these values may not hire the school facilities.
 - Ensuring support, advice and training is available to staff to enable them to deal with concerns surrounding radicalisation and extremism.
- h. Each school is required to adopt the principles set out in this policy.
- i. Each school is required to ensure the Prevent agenda is incorporated into the School Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and to ensure all information regarding Prevent is updated as appropriate.
- j. Schools are directed to ensure their Online Safety policies and procedures reflect the Prevent agenda.

6. Recognising the Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

- a. 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.
- b. Pupils may become susceptible 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 school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.
- c. Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis – the student/pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
 - Personal Crisis – the student/pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may dissociate 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/pupils 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/pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
 - Experience of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration.
 - Special Educational Need – students/pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.
- d. Critical risk factors could include:
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters.
 - Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
 - Processing 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.
- e. Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by pupils or staff must always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with the school Behaviour Policy for pupils and the Trust Code of Conduct for staff.
- f. Each school must ensure that all of staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it. All staff must be made aware of the

Prevent strategy and radicalisation and extremism must be an integral part of regular staff safeguarding training.

- g. Each school within the Trust is required to identify a named Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.
- h. When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC / Headteacher. The school must support pupils who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of their wider safeguarding responsibilities and where it is felt by the school staff that a pupil is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences the school must ensure that that pupil is offered assistance. **Additionally, in such instances, the school has a duty to inform and seek external support from the Trust Central Team and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism, as appropriate.**
- i. Each school will closely follow the locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

7. Teaching Approaches

- a. Each Elements Diocesan Learning Trust school must 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 each school this will be achieved by good teaching, primarily via Citizenship and PSHE and RHE sessions; but also by adopting the methods outlined in the latest Government's guidance. These approaches include:
 - Setting targets for young people to build a sense of ownership.
 - Creating a safe space for dialogue between staff and pupils.
 - Building resilience in pupils.
 - Improving pupil skills for collaborative work.
 - Improving pupils' ability to interact with each other and a peer mentoring scheme.

Each Trust school will ensure that teaching approaches help our pupils build resilience to extremism and give pupils a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. The academy will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. The school will teach and encourage pupils to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith and strive to prepare each pupil for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

- b. Each Trust school is expected to take opportunities to work with local partners, families and communities in their efforts to challenge extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our pupils' experiences and horizons.

8. Use of External Agencies and Speakers

- a. Each Elements Diocesan Learning Trust school will, at some point, invite external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of their pupils; however appropriate procedures to positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers must be put in place. This includes checking the DBS of all external providers, viewing material that will be used beforehand and conducting a social media check on such agencies or individuals, as appropriate.
- b. Such vetting is to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages or that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the school's values and ethos.
- c. Specifically, each 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 schemes of work to avoid contradictory messages or duplication.
 - Activities are matched to the needs of pupils.
 - Activities are carefully evaluated by the school to ensure that they are effective.
- d. By delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, Elements Diocesan Learning Trust school will strive to ensure our pupils recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability, and to help pupils develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

9. Whistleblowing

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation pupils and staff are directed to make use of school / Elements Diocesan Learning Trust internal systems to whistle blow or raise any issue in confidence. Please refer to the separate Elements Diocesan Learning Trust Whistleblowing Policy.

10. Recruitment

- a. The arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our school will follow government guidance on safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made in the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked and that we complete and maintain a Single Central Record of such vetting checks.
- b. Appropriately applied apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general will deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement. Each Elements Diocesan Learning Trust school must be alert to the possibility that persons may seek to gain positions within their academy so as to unduly influence the academy's character and ethos. Staff must be aware that such persons seek to limit the opportunities for their pupils thereby rendering them vulnerable to extremist views and radicalisation as a consequence.
- c. 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 it is intended that academies within Elements Diocesan Learning Trust will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

9. Role of School Boards

- a. The Local School Board of each school will undertake regular training led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibilities as Governors, including their statutory safeguarding duties.
- b. The Local School Board of each school will support the ethos and values of the school and will support the school in tackling extremism and radicalisation.
- c. In line with the provisions set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023' the Local School Board will challenge the school's senior management team on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness.

10. Policy adoption, Monitoring and Review

- a. The Policy was considered and adopted by the Elements Diocesan Learning Trust Board in line with their overall duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.
- b. Parents/carers will be issued with a hard copy of this Policy on request. This Policy will also be made available to parents/carers via the Elements Diocesan Learning Trust website and the websites of each individual Elements Diocesan Learning Trust school.

The Trust Board will review this policy on a regular cycle but may adopt any amendments outside this time frame in accordance with any new legislation or guidance