

Contact: Mr Strickland

Ref: SSN/SN

26th October 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: PREVENT and Britishness

I thought it pertinent to write to you about key changes in safeguarding legislation which Brooke Weston Academy must legally take into account. I am sure that it has not escaped your attention that radicalisation and extremism have become big concerns within the educational landscape in the last 18 months. As a result, the Government expects all schools and Academies to promote the Prevent agenda. I wanted to give you a clearer picture of what this means.

What is radicalisation?

This is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice.

What is extremism?

Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as 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. It also includes calls for the death of members of the armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

What is Prevent?

The principle aim of Prevent is to stop individuals being drawn into terrorism. This includes violent and non-violent extremism which in turn can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorism may seek to exploit.

What does this mean for Brooke Weston Academy?

Safeguarding students from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm. As an Academy we will continue to monitor all of our students for any signs of harm that come under the wider safeguarding agenda. Ultimately, the safety of all students that attend Brooke Weston Academy remains a key priority for the school.

Brooke Weston Academy, as part of the Brooke Weston Trust, has a statutory duty under The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the statutory Prevent Guidance 2015 to have due regard for the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. There are a number of behaviours which may indicate a child is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extremist views which could include becoming distant or showing loss of interest in friends and activities or possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause.

Staff are expected to be vigilant in protecting students from the threat of radicalisation and refer any concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff have received appropriate training to ensure they have the knowledge and confidence to identify students at risk, challenge extremist ideas and know where and how to refer concerns.

Brooke Weston Academy is also committed to ensuring that 'British' values underpin all aspects of the education and curriculum offered to its students. Britishness can be taken as 'referring to a sense of national identity of the British people.' However, it is difficult to create or devise a definition that is agreeable by all. In many respects, Britishness has a fluidity to it, given the ever changing nature of the multi-cultural mix of people who occupy the British Isles. Therefore, Brooke Weston Academy strongly adheres to a view that irrespective of faith, gender, ethnicity or colour, all students are given the same equal opportunity to education. All students are given the opportunity to enhance their life chances. Every student is encouraged to become a well-rounded citizen, armed with the skills necessary to survive in an ever changing workplace and be capable of making sound moral and ethical decisions.

The following aspects of Britishness are promoted by Brooke Weston Academy:

- Freedom and democracy
- Tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
- Respect of law and order
- Belief in personal and social responsibility
- Respect for British institutions, including the Government and the monarchy
- The welfare state
- Mutual Respect
- Individual liberty
- An awareness and understanding of the constitution, as laid down in Magna Carta
- An understanding of Britain's global position

None of the above detracts from the mission statement of the Academy, where we aim to provide a stimulating learning experience which places learning and teaching at the heart of everything we do, where the focus is on securing the very best academic progress and personal development for every student. In short, we want to instil a sense of excellence, resilience and aspiration in all of our students. We are determined that a handful of years spent at Brooke Weston Academy will open a lifetime of opportunity for all those who pass through our doors.

I hope this information has been informative and helpful.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Strickland
Associate Principal