

Heatherwood School Statement on Extremism

How we protect pupils from extremist views, including religious and political extremism

Curriculum

Heatherwood School curriculum covers the main world religions and promotes tolerance and understanding of world views where appropriate. When applicable, we discuss current issues in the news that may prompt pupils to question why people behave in the way they do and their motives behind it. We encourage pupils to use critical thinking skills to identify bias and in doing so develop the skills of analysis and evaluation. The values of 'right' and 'wrong' are covered across many lessons and, in terms of religious beliefs and British law, it is made clear what is acceptable behaviour in this country.

We aim to:

- promote discernment
- have secure values and beliefs, and have principles to distinguish right from wrong
- challenge injustice, be committed to human rights and strive to live peaceably with others
- reflect on the impact of religion and belief in the world, considering both the importance of interfaith dialogue and the tensions that exist within and between religions and beliefs.
- where appropriate, develop the pupils' evaluative skills, showing reasoned and balanced viewpoints when considering their own and others' responses to religious, philosophical and spiritual issues
- enable the pupils to encounter people from different religious, cultural and philosophical groups, who can express a range of convictions on religious and ethical issues.

We visit a local church, a Hindu temple and offer key stage 5 pupils the chance to experience multi-cultural Doncaster. We use online media regularly to enhance their experience of religious views and offer balanced arguments in all cases.

Where appropriate the concept of nationalism in its extreme form arises *is covered throughout the thematic curriculum approach but also in bespoke sessions designed to raise the awareness of selected pupils providing them with an idea of the consequences of indoctrination, racism and extreme nationalist policies and ideals.*

Within PSHE, Theme and Curriculum Days we explore some aspects of religion and politics which include the exploration of some aspects of extremist views. Pupils are encouraged to discuss, as far as possible, why these views might be seen as extreme and why and how people in the world may express them; pupils might also discuss freedom of speech and association. As part of sex and relationship education, PSHE, Curriculum and Focus Days pupils discuss how to make choices about right and wrong, how to resist peer pressure and how to cope with upsetting news or emotional difficulties. These themes, where appropriate, can also be explored through role play.

Class teachers

Within circle time more able pupils might be encouraged to discuss current news items from television and the press. In this context pupils can be presented with a more balanced view of a particular story and together we can help and support them if they become worried or distressed about any particular story, especially where there has been loss of life. Great sensitivity is used towards pupils whose family members may be in areas that might be the source of many of these news items.

Role of staff

Heatherwood School will not tolerate any extremist, political or religious views expressed openly by staff or governors either in school to pupils or other staff members, or in more public forums such as social media. Staff members may be subject to disciplinary action if necessary.

Supporting Pupils: Heatherwood is aware that pupils can potentially come into contact with extremist literature or propaganda at any time, including when on school trips and in the community. Staff leading or accompanying trips must be vigilant to this possibility. It is our duty to support pupils who may be distressed or frightened by what they read or see. Heatherwood always seeks to help pupils develop a balanced view as well as providing them with coping strategies to deal with any unforeseen external pressures; however, every effort is made to avoid pupils becoming phobic about certain groups or religions.

If a pupil reports that they have been given information about, or have heard, extremist views, please inform a member of the SLT who will then work with parents to support that child.

Heatherwood School exercises extra sensitivity with pupils who may have a family member living or fighting overseas. We are aware of pupils currently on roll to whom this may apply.

Should pupils have come into contact with extremist propaganda and have come to school to proselytize or 'spread the word' staff are extra vigilant and report their suspicions to the designated lead for safeguarding (Daryl Bennett). Due to their additional needs Heatherwood pupils are vulnerable to such influences and must be safeguarded from any grooming activities related to extremism.

Parents and Visitors to the school

Heatherwood School does not tolerate any extremist views expressed by any visitors to the school, including parents. Staff members who witness any such views must refuse any further dialogue with that individual and inform a member of the SLT immediately.