

Protecting Students from Religious Extremism.

As a school we have a responsibility to protect children from extremist views in schools. All schools in England, whether in the state or independent sectors, including those with a faith ethos like ours, must have measures in place to protect students from extremist materials. As a school we provide RE and Lifeskills lessons that encourage pupils to respect each other's religion, beliefs and practices.

Pupils are taught to use the correct language when referring to people of other nationalities, religions or cultures and to accept everyone for who they are.

Appropriate v Inappropriate

In school we have a very strict policy for reporting events that are deemed to offend someone's faith, culture or practices. Incidents where a pupil feels intimidated by a comment made in person, on line or on social media should be reported to an appropriate adult.

Please explain to your child that only the correct terminology should be used when discussing people of other faiths and cultures, either in person or on line. As with many friendship issues, it often stems from a throw away comment that one child deems amusing and the other deems offensive. Please encourage your child to ask people from other cultures questions about their similarities and differences and focus on the things they have in common as well as what is different. As a Church of England School our focus is on respect, tolerance and loving others and letting our light shine whoever we are.

What can make a young person susceptible to adopting extremist views and supporting violence?

The key conclusion from available evidence is that there is no single profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism, or single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas.

However it does appear the decision by a young person to become involved in violent extremism:

- May begin with a search for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- May be driven by the desire for 'adventure' and excitement
- May be driven by a desire to enhance the self-esteem of the individual and promote their 'street cred'
- Is likely to involve identification with a charismatic individual and attraction to a group which can offer identity, social network and support.

What can we do?

- Monitor your child's on line activity and ensure that videos and links posted to their social media pages are acceptable to view.
- Talk to your child about religious extremism; explain what it is and the dangers of it.
- Ensure your child is aware of language that is appropriate and inappropriate both in spoken and written word.
- Report any incidents of religious discrimination/extremism to the appropriate person in school.

If you would like any further information on how we ensure our school stays free from religious extremism or wish to discuss what is taught in RE and Lifeskills, please contact the school.

