



Clacton County High School

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Higher Expectations, Raising Aspirations

Statement on Extremism

(Updated March 2021)

How staff at Clacton County High School are protecting students against extremism.

1. In the curriculum

The Religious Education department at Clacton County High School studies the main world religions and promotes tolerance and understanding of world views in timetabled lessons in KS3 and through PROUD days (Perseverance, Responsibility, Opportunity, Unity and Diversity) in KS4. When appropriate, we discuss current issues in the news that may prompt students to question human behaviour and the motives behind it. We encourage students to use critical thinking skills to identify bias and in doing so develop the skills of analysis and evaluation. Lessons regularly look at 'right' and 'wrong' in terms of religious beliefs and British law, so it is made clear what is acceptable behaviour in this country.

We follow the Essex agreed syllabus and its requirement 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"
- "develop their evaluative skills, showing reasoned and balanced viewpoints when considering their own and others' responses to religious, philosophical and spiritual issues"
- "encounter people from different religious, cultural and philosophical groups, who can express a range of convictions on religious and ethical issues."

The concept of nationalism in its extreme form arises in History lessons in year 9, when aggressive nationalism is discussed as a contributory cause of the tensions that led to both world wars in the 20th Century, and within the GCSE course in year 10, whilst studying Nazi Germany - indoctrination of young people, and the consequences of racist and extreme nationalist policies, the Holocaust and euthanasia programmes. Students also study terrorism by looking at the events of September 11th and the Twin Towers in year 8 and the extreme views of those that committed these acts.

Within the taught curriculum and PROUD days, students explore aspects of religion and politics, which include exploring aspects of extremist views. Students are encouraged to discuss, as far as possible, why these views are extreme and why and how people in the world may express them. Within work on British citizenship, students are led into a discussion on the freedom of speech and association. Part of our PSHEE curriculum, explored during PROUD days, also allows students to 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 are also explored during drama lessons.

2. Form time and whole school roles

Within form time, students are encouraged to discuss current news items from television and in the press. In this context students can be presented with a more balanced view of a particular story and together, staff can offer help and support if students become worried or distressed about any particular story, especially where there has been loss of life. Staff need to be especially sensitive to students whose family members may be in areas that might be the source of many of these news items.

Themes of tolerance for others and differences in beliefs, are also explored in assemblies held for cohorts, key stages and the whole school.

Individual support from senior staff and pastoral teams can be given to any student that expresses more serious anxiety.

3. Role of staff

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

Students may 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. Schools have a duty to support students who may be distressed or frightened by what they read or see. Staff must always help students to have a balanced view as well as provide coping strategies in dealing with what may be external pressures; it is important that students do not become phobic about certain groups or religions.

If a student reports that they have been given information about, or have heard extremist views, a senior member of staff must be informed who will then work with parents and a member of the pastoral team to support that child. Please note: it is important to be extra sensitive with students who may have a family member living or serving overseas. There are undoubtedly students currently on roll to whom this will apply.

There may be occasions where students have come into contact with extremist propaganda and have come to school to proselytize or 'spread the word'. Staff must be vigilant and report to the designated lead for safeguarding any suspicions or incidents. Students are vulnerable to such influences and must be safeguarded from any grooming activities related to extremism.

4. Parents and visitors to the school

This school does not tolerate any extremist views expressed by any visitors to the school, including parents. If a staff member hears such views then they must refuse any further dialogue with that person and immediately inform a senior member of staff.