



Statement on Combating Extremism

Ways in which IES Breckland protects students from extremist views, including religious and political extremism.

The Curriculum

Religious Education at IES Breckland studies the main world religions and promotes tolerance and understanding of world views. When appropriate current issues in the news are discussed and that may prompt students to question human behaviour and their motives behind it. Students are encouraged 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.

IES Breckland follows the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus in its requirement to:

- “provoke challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human”
- “develop pupils’ awareness and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, practices, forms of expression and the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures”
- “play an important role in preparing pupils for adult life and employment, enabling them to develop respect and sensitivity to others, in particular those with different faiths and beliefs”
- “promote religious understanding and respect, and to challenge prejudice, discrimination and simplistic stereotyping.”
- “distinguish between opinions, viewpoints and beliefs in connection with issues of conviction and faith”
- “enabling pupils to think about topical spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues including the importance of resolving conflict fairly”
- “developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities by learning about what is fair and unfair, right and wrong, and being encouraged to share their opinions”

Online media is regularly used to enhance student experiences of religious views and to offer balanced arguments in all cases.

The concept of nationalism in its extreme form arises in History lessons, 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 via the Holocaust and euthanasia programmes.

Within PSHE lessons, aspects of religion and politics are studied in a way that includes 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 this leads to discussions about freedom of speech and association. As part of Sex and Relationship Education and PSHE students 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 through the Drama curriculum.

Role of Mentor and Whole School

Within mentor 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 we can help and support them if they become worried or distressed about any particular story, especially where there has been loss of life. We 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, which are held throughout the year and are differentiated to ensure they contain age appropriate material. Individual support from Senior Staff and the Learning Support Centre can be given to any student who expresses more serious anxiety.

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 other staff members or in more public forums such as social media. Staff members may be subject to disciplinary action if necessary.

Any of our students may come into contact with extremist literature or propaganda at any time including when on school visits and in the community. Staff leading or accompanying visits must be vigilant to this possibility. Staff will support students who may be distressed or frightened by what they read or see. Students will be helped to have a balanced view as well as give them, coping strategies in dealing with what may be external pressures, however it is important to ensure 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 member of the SLT should be informed who will then work with parents and a member of the Learning Support Centre to support the student.

Note: staff must be extra sensitive with students who may have a family member living or fighting overseas. School are aware of students currently on roll to whom this may apply and there may be others, about whom we are unaware.

There may be occasions where students have come into contact with extremist propaganda and have come to school to proselytize or 'spread the word'. All adults must be vigilant and report to the Designated Safeguarding Professional (Mrs Caroline Ingarfield / Mrs Kathy Harris) any suspicion or incident. Students are vulnerable to such influences and must be safeguarded from any grooming activities related to extremism.

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 inform a member of Senior Staff immediately.