

Policy document control box	
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1. Purpose

Red Balloon of the Air (RBAir) has a range of duties in relation to safeguarding children from harm, including extremism, and we recognise that the protection of children from radicalisation and extremist narratives is a key part of our safeguarding responsibilities.

Additionally, RBAir has a duty to promote British fundamental values as part of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. We aim to embed SMSC education as an intrinsic part of RBAir provision, reflecting our ethos and aims, and to promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This will allow students to develop and practice the skills and attitudes that will enable them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

2. Scope

This Prevent and Anti-Radicalisation policy forms the basis for practice across RBAir. All staff will have at least annual updates on Prevent duties as a part of their statutory safeguarding training delivered by our Head of Safeguarding who has also undertaken Prevent Lead training and we will ensure that staff are fully engaged in being vigilant about radicalisation. We will ensure they overcome professional disbelief that such issues could happen within the RBAir community, and ensure we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to keep our students safe from harm.

3. Policy statement

Red Balloon of the Air is committed to ensuring:

All staff, trustees and volunteers have the training to understand what radicalisation and extremism are, and why we need to be vigilant in our provision.

All staff, trustees and volunteers will know our policy and procedures on anti-radicalisation and will follow them when issues arise.

All parents and students will know that there are policies in place to keep students safe from harm and that RBAir regularly reviews these systems to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

4. Key factors within Prevent and anti-radicalisation

Radicalisation is defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind. Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views.

Although serious incidents involving radicalisation have not occurred at Red Balloon of the Air to date, it is important for us to be constantly vigilant and remain fully informed about the issues. Staff are reminded to suspend any professional belief that instances of radicalisation 'could not happen here' and to refer any concerns immediately through the appropriate channels (currently via our Head of Safeguarding – who is our Safeguarding Lead -, other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or the Headteacher).

5. Vulnerability factors

Anyone can be radicalised but there are some factors which may make a young person more vulnerable. These include:

- being easily influenced or impressionable
- having low self-esteem or being isolated
- feeling that rejection, discrimination or injustice is taking place in society
- experiencing community tension amongst different groups
- being disrespectful or angry towards family and peers
- having a strong need for acceptance or belonging
- experiencing grief such as the loss of a loved one.

Many of the young people within RBAir have factors in their lives which may make them more vulnerable to extremist narratives, but there is much we can do to offset this risk through building students' self-esteem as part of a kind and inclusive learning community.

6. Building children's resilience to radicalisation

Schools of all kinds have a role in enabling young people to explore difficult social issues like terrorism and violence in a considered and informed way. We believe that we can build students' resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment to learn about and debate controversial issues, fostering a sense of belonging, and helping them to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making in our democratic society.

RBAir, in all aspects of its practice, promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and, within this, fundamental British values. All teachers, and particularly those delivering PSHEE, support students to recognise and manage risk, make safer choices, and recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and wellbeing. Mentors and therapists also support students to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships and work to empower our young people to make safe and sensible choices or to seek help when necessary.

7. Staff training

The statutory guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Key staff have received special individual training in accordance with their role in school. All members of staff receive Prevent updates as part of their annual Safeguarding training every academic year. All new staff, trustees and volunteers who join RBAir receive Prevent training from our Designated Safeguarding Lead as part of their Safeguarding induction and initial safeguarding training.

8. Specific responsibilities

The headteacher (day-to-day practice may be managed by a nominated member of staff, usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead) will:

- ensure RBAir has an appropriate Prevent policy in place which is updated at least annually;
- provide (either directly or through access to appropriate providers) high quality Prevent training for staff;
- ensure all RBAir offers clear, open lines of communication through which students and staff are able to report any incidents of concern;
- ensure procedures are in place for responding to potential incidents or radicalisation or extremism;
- ensure RBAir staff provide through PSHEE and other sessions, education to students to help them become 'responsible citizens' and to stay safe;
- ensure RBAir IT systems monitor and filter online access to help keep students 'on task' and that these systems along with RBAir's E-Safety processes will reduce the likelihood of harmful experiences online;
- evaluate, in conjunction with the Safeguarding Lead, any concerns regarding possible radicalisation or extremism and deal with these appropriately, making a clear distinction between individuals who present with a 'terrorism vulnerability' requiring Channel support and those who pose a 'terrorism risk' requiring management by the police.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- they have an up-to-date awareness of Prevent matters and of the current RBAir Prevent and Anti-Extremism policy and practices;
- they immediately report any suspected case of extremism or potential radicalisation to their Headteacher, the Safeguarding Lead, or another DSL;
- an understanding of citizenship and fundamental British values are taught, and students understand both their rights and responsibilities as British citizens;
- SMSC is embedded across all elements of the RBAir programme.

The designated person for child protection (the RBAir Safeguarding Lead) is trained in Prevent issues and is aware of the potential for serious child protection / safeguarding issues when individuals:

- are accessing extremist materials;

- are espousing extremist narratives;
- are demonstrating acute behaviour changes in relation to the working definition of extremism;
- have had traumatic exposure to conflict zones;
- are demonstrating acute intolerance towards people from different ethnic backgrounds, cultures or other protected traits as defined in the 2010 Equality Act.

The Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher will evaluate each case to ensure appropriate action is taken, for example by making a referral to the LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) or government Channel programme.

9. Related legislation and documents

Legislation and guidance that inform this document

- Children Act (2004)
- Channel Duty Guidance (Gov.UK 2014)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Gov.UK July 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Gov.UK Sept 2023)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act (Gov.UK Feb 2015)
- Radicalisation (NSPCC Feb 2020)

Other Red Balloon policies to be read in conjunction with this one

- E-Safety
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding and Child Protection