



St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School

### **Extremism Policy**

Approved by the Governing Body on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014

St. Teresa's is a Catholic school where Christian Values, known as our **Core Values**, underpin every aspect of school life. Our Mission Statement outlines how these values influence our aims and guide our work together.

In formulating this policy, the Governors have taken account of the guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) who has called for all public bodies to make explicit their preventative measures to minimise the threat of extremism in their setting.

#### **Context:**

Violent extremism is sadly nothing new. Throughout history there have been groups and individuals prepared to use violence to achieve their aims. A small minority of these seek to radicalise or indoctrinate young people with an ideology which justifies this use of violence through a distorted interpretation of a set of values.

The threat to the UK from international terrorism is substantial. The terrorist threats that we now face are more diverse than ever before, dispersed across a wider geographical area and often in countries without effective governance. We therefore face an unpredictable situation.

The Governing Body has a **zero tolerance** approach to extremist behaviour for all community members. We rely on our strong values to steer our work and ensure the pastoral care of our pupils protects them from exposure to negative influences. Furthermore, our positive promotion of our Code of Conduct, "Be Kind: Be Safe: Be Responsible," equips our pupils with the skills to reject violence in all its forms.

It remains rare for very young children to become involved in extremist activity, nonetheless, they may still be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, including via the internet, from a very young age.

## Strategies for Preventing Extremism:

The Office for Security & Counter Terrorism works to counter the threat from terrorism and their work is detailed in the counter terrorism strategy CONTEST. This strategy is based on four areas of work:

- **Pursue**

To stop terrorist attacks

- **Prevent**

To stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism

- **Protect**

To strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack

- **Prepare**

To mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

Our role, as a school, is outlined more specifically in the DCSF document 'Learning together to be safe: A toolkit to help schools contribute to the prevention of violent extremism.'

Primarily our work will be concerned with PREVENTION and is outlined more specifically in the DCSF document 'Learning together to be safe: A toolkit to help schools contribute to the prevention of violent extremism.'

## Aims:

- We encourage our pupils to adopt and live out our **Core Values**. These complement the key "British Values" of **tolerance, respect, understanding, compassion and harmonious living**.
- We help pupils to understand the importance of democracy and freedom of speech, through age-appropriate assemblies (eg. Scottish Referendum 2014), our elected School Council members and Year Six exit interviews etc.
- Through our twinning arrangements with a Catholic School in the Gambia ( a tolerant Muslim country) we help pupils to value difference and to appreciate the positive influence of a belief system.
- We are alert to the dangers posed for young people and provide guidance on keeping themselves safe, including on-line activity.
- To be an active partner in local community events and arrangements beyond our Catholic Community so that children appreciate and value their neighbours and friends who may not share their faith background.
- To promote pupil wellbeing, confidence and resilience through our planned curriculum and Out of Hours Learning opportunities.
- To focus on making good choices from a very young age, so that pupils understand the impact and consequences of their actions on others.
- To provide positive adult role models among the staff and Governors.
- All Foundation Governors are charged by the Bishop of Brentwood, with the task of ensuring the school promotes its Catholic Ethos in all things.

