



Nourishing the fitrah of each unique child

Partisan Political Views Policy

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said:
“Speak what is good and acquire gains, or refrain from speaking malign and be safe.”
(Musnad al-Shihab al-Quḍā’ī 666)

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Partisan Political Views Policy

Staff members should always demonstrate courtesy to colleagues and pupils by refraining from expressing strong personal and political views. Please note that expression of partisan political views must be avoided in all aspects of teaching.

Staff members are requested to ensure personal views are not directly or indirectly imparted through delivery of the curriculum.

Clarification of Terms

The following are definitions of the key terms used in this policy:

Partisan

The best synonym for "partisan" is "one-sided".

Political views

Views expressed for a political purpose. A political purpose is either directly or indirectly to:

1. Further the interests of a particular political party; or
2. Procure changes to the laws of this or another country; or
3. Procure the reversal of government policy or of particular decisions of governmental authorities in this or another country.

Promotion of Fundamental British Values and SMSC In the Curriculum

This policy is brought in to deliver the commitment made in the *Prevent duty* and to promote SMSC across the school.

The regulation refers to the systematic promotion of partisan views in a way that is likely to exert undue influence on the views of pupils.

This does not mean that political ideas cannot be discussed, however, pupils should learn about public institutions and services, including those of a political nature, and be introduced to fundamental British values that have a political dimension.

In particular, subjects such as history, religious education cannot be taught effectively without reference to the political context. What is required by this regulation is that pupils are not indoctrinated or unduly influenced by the promotion of partisan political views.

Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards on personal and professional conduct, specifies that teachers must ensure that their 'personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.'

The policy aims to prevent the political indoctrination of pupils through the curriculum. At Unique Academy, pupils may come across political views through presentation or may discuss political issues as part of current affairs. Pupils should not, however, be actively encouraged by teachers or others to support particular political viewpoints. This part of the SMSC standard ensures that pupils are prevented from a negative outcome.

Concepts such as democracy and the historical development of the political process in society cannot be meaningfully taught without reference to political belief and practice and the use of concrete examples is normally helpful in promoting understanding. However, at Unique Academy, teaching staff will not exploit pupils' vulnerability by seeking to convince them that a particular political position is necessarily correct, or by trying to impose their own views on pupils. Any such action would breach Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards on personal and professional conduct, which can be taken into account for the purposes of proceedings under the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012, which apply to teachers in independent schools.

At Unique Academy, teachers will be aware of the professional standards applying to them and the requirements of this standard.

Unique Academy will ensure that views are not promoted which are inconsistent with the requirements of any other part of the SMSC standards (for example views which are derogatory of particular ethnic groups or faiths, or which are actively in opposition to the fundamental British values referred to in the standard).

All visiting speakers will be vetted before they are allowed to address pupils at Unique Academy and the content of their presentation will be agreed beforehand to ensure that it does not contravene with British values (***see Visitors' Policy And Visiting Speakers Agreement***).

Unique Academy will keep a record of visiting speakers, giving details of the organisation (if any) that they represent, as well as of any extra-curricular activities organised by or promoted by the school, where political issues are or might be brought to the attention of pupils.

Unique Academy will take reasonable practicable steps to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils:

- while they are in attendance at the school;
- while they are taking part in extracurricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school; or
- in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere;

Pupils are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

Staff are expected to take steps, in every aspect of their work, to ensure that when political issues are discussed or arise, pupils are made aware that there are normally countervailing views and a balance is struck between the opinions and beliefs discussed. This may be during lessons, or when extra-curricular activities within the school such as debates take place, or through the use of external speakers. The word balanced means nothing more than 'fair' and dispassionate'.

Where a speaker has expressed partisan political views on a subject, the teacher in liaison with the Head Teacher presents opposing views on the subject to pupils in the course of subsequent class teaching or in a whole school assembly. It would not be necessary to challenge the speaker's views at the time or arrange for a speaker with opposing views to address pupils at a later date.

The above also relates to the use of promotional literature in the school building for events which are not part of the curriculum which pupils might see and as a result wish to attend. In general, Unique Academy strongly discourages the use of any promotional literature which promote political views on its site. If any such material, which are political in nature was to be present, and came to the attention of the school, we aim to ensure that they are not unbalanced (for example by advertising events held only by one political party or proponents of one particular view) and that they do not risk breaches of other SMSC standards (for example, by advertising speakers who are promoting anti British values).