COLMERS SCHOOL
& SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

No Platform Policy

2026-27

Relevant legislation and guidance	Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015; Education Act 1996; Education and Inspections Act 2006; Equality Act 2010; Human Rights Act 1998; Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR; KCSIE 2026; Prevent duty guidance; Working Together 2026; DfE political impartiality guidance
Linked policies	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Prevent Risk Assessment; Visitors Policy; Equality Policy; Behaviour Policy; Online Safety Policy; Lettings Policy; Complaints Policy; Records Management Policy
Review frequency	Annual
Policy owner	B Carter
Approved by	Governing Body
Date approved	September 2026
Next review date	September 2027

1. Purpose and principles

The school provides a safe, inclusive environment in which pupils can encounter, discuss and challenge a wide range of ideas. It will protect pupils and the school community from terrorism, radicalisation, unlawful speech, harassment and other reasonably foreseeable harm. Decisions under this policy will be lawful, evidence-based, proportionate and consistent with safeguarding, equality and political impartiality duties. Lawful views will not be excluded merely because they are controversial, unpopular or critical of the school or government.

2. Scope

This policy applies to external speakers, visitors, organisations, agencies and materials used in lessons, assemblies, workshops, careers activity, enrichment, lettings, online events and events organised in the school's name. It applies to staff and pupils who invite, host or promote an external contribution. Routine visitors managed under established safeguarding and visitor procedures may use proportionate checks. This policy should be read with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Visitors Policy and other linked policies.

3. Legal and guidance framework

- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires specified authorities to have due regard to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism.
- Education law requires schools to prohibit partisan political activity by pupils under 12 and to secure balanced treatment of opposing views when political issues are brought to pupils' attention.
- Safeguarding, equality, human rights and data-protection duties apply to planning, decisions, information sharing and event delivery.
- The school will follow current Keeping Children Safe in Education, Prevent duty, Working Together to Safeguard Children and DfE political impartiality guidance.

The Prevent duty is a safeguarding duty focused on stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The government's 2024 definition of extremism is non-statutory and must not be treated as an automatic legal ban. Where terms or guidance change, the current statutory wording and published guidance will take precedence.

4. Key definitions

No platform means refusing, cancelling or ending access to a school audience, premises, systems or endorsement because a material risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level. Radicalisation means the process through which a person comes to support or participate in terrorism. An external speaker includes any individual or organisation contributing in person or remotely who is not acting as a member of school staff. Political issue and partisan political view have the meanings explained in current DfE political impartiality guidance.

5. Roles and accountability

The Governing Body oversees the policy and receives assurance about its operation. The Headteacher is accountable for implementation and final decisions and may delegate routine approvals to a named senior leader. The Designated Safeguarding Lead advises on safeguarding and Prevent concerns and determines whether a referral or external advice is required. Organisers must submit accurate information in good time, complete required checks and follow all conditions. Staff hosting an event remain responsible for pupils and for stopping or escalating concerns.

A person involved in approval must disclose any material conflict of interest. High-risk, disputed or politically sensitive proposals must be referred to the Headteacher and DSL. Where appropriate, the school may seek advice from the local authority Prevent team, safeguarding partners, police, legal or HR advisers, or the Department for Education.

6. Proposal and approval process

No external contribution may be confirmed or publicised as approved until the school's process is complete. The organiser must provide, normally at least 15 school days before the event, the speaker's identity and organisation, purpose, audience, format, proposed content and materials, publicity, recording or livestreaming plans, funding or fees, previous school contact and any known concerns. Shorter notice may be accepted only where proportionate checks can still be completed.

The approving leader will record the decision as approved, approved with conditions, deferred pending information, or refused. Approval relates only to the stated event and may be withdrawn if information or risk changes. The school may verify identity, references, public statements, affiliations and relevant online material, but checks must be necessary, accurate, fair and limited to the decision being made.

7. Risk assessment

The assessment will consider the age and vulnerability of the audience; educational purpose; content and materials; risk of support for terrorism or unlawful activity; discriminatory, threatening or harassing speech; safeguarding history; political balance; security and public-order risks; online amplification; reputational misrepresentation; and whether the proposed controls are workable. A protected characteristic, faith, lawful political belief or association is not itself evidence of risk.

Information will be tested for reliability and context. Anonymous or disputed allegations will not be treated as established fact without further enquiry. Decisions will not rely solely on media coverage, social-media controversy, peaceful protest or disagreement with a speaker's lawful views.

8. Decision and no-platform action

The school will use the least restrictive effective response. Conditions may include an amended topic or materials, advance questions, balanced speakers or teaching, an age-appropriate audience, staff chairing, supervision, restricted recording, controlled access, additional security or a different format. Access will be refused, cancelled or ended where the school reasonably concludes that the contribution would be unlawful, would support terrorism, presents a safeguarding or safety risk that cannot be managed, would breach political impartiality duties, or would otherwise expose pupils or the school community to serious harm that proportionate controls cannot address.

9. Event delivery and intervention

The host will brief the speaker on the agreed purpose, audience, safeguarding boundaries, political impartiality and event conditions. Pupils will be prepared to engage critically and respectfully. A member of staff will remain present and may pause or end the event if conditions are breached, content materially departs from what was approved, or an immediate safeguarding or safety concern arises. Emergency concerns must be handled under safeguarding, emergency or security procedures. Any recording, photography or personal-data use requires prior approval.

10. Political impartiality and curriculum

The school will not promote partisan political views. When political issues are taught or raised through curriculum or extra-curricular activity, pupils will receive a balanced presentation of opposing views appropriate to their age and the context. Balance may be achieved across a programme or sequence rather than within every event. Staff may challenge misinformation, unlawful conduct and views that conflict with safeguarding or equality expectations without presenting their own partisan position as fact.

11. Concerns referrals and reconsideration

Safeguarding or radicalisation concerns must be reported promptly to the DSL and managed under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. A Prevent referral is a safeguarding action, not a punishment, and will be considered on the evidence and current referral guidance. Concerns about immediate danger or suspected crime must be escalated urgently. An organiser or speaker may ask the Headteacher to reconsider a refusal or condition by providing relevant new information; the review will be completed by a person not materially involved where practicable. Complaints follow the Complaints Policy.

12. Records confidentiality and data protection

The school will keep a proportionate record of proposals, checks, risk assessments, decisions, conditions, incidents and referrals. Information will be shared only with those who need it for safeguarding, legal, operational or governance purposes and retained in accordance with data-protection law and the Records Management Policy. Sensitive personal data and unverified allegations will be handled carefully. Governor reporting will be anonymised unless identification is necessary for the Governing Body's functions.

13. Training and communication

1. Relevant staff will understand the approval route, political impartiality duties, safeguarding indicators and how to report concerns.
2. Event organisers and hosts will receive clear instructions and access to a standard proposal and risk-assessment record.
3. Speakers will be told the purpose, audience, conditions and conduct expectations before the event.
4. Pupils and parents will receive information where this is appropriate to the event, safeguarding risk or curriculum context.

14. Monitoring and review

The Governing Body will review this policy annually. The Headteacher and DSL will monitor approvals, conditions, refusals, incidents, referrals, equality impact and training, without receiving unnecessary personal information. An earlier review will take place following a serious incident or material change in legislation or statutory guidance.