
The ACT Building Resilience Project

Case Study: Extremism and terrorism as reported in the media

School: Priory School, Southsea, Portsmouth

Priory School is a secondary comprehensive for pupils aged 11-16. It is a co-educational, mixed-ability school and is part of a Multi-Academy Trust (Bohunt Education Trust). Pupils come from the surrounding area and include a diverse range of abilities and ethnicities.

Aims

The 'Extremism and terrorism as reported in the media' project developed critical thinking, problem-solving and enquiry skills through three Citizenship lessons with two year 9 classes. Pupils explored concepts of democracy, rule of law and rights and responsibilities in the context of media bias/falsification in reporting about Islam and Islamophobia.

Actions

Pupils critically engaged with the cases to decide whether the behaviours demonstrated were 'extreme' or 'reasonable' in their opinion. They looked at examples of social media posts relating to the Paris terror attacks and France's response to the terror attacks. Critical engagement with sources helped pupils learn to challenge what they see and hear in the media. They used creative approaches and mask-making to help them express their opinions and understanding of the issues and to challenge Islamophobic ideas.

Impact

Pupils commented that they now have a language with which to discuss incidents of 'Islamophobia'. They have a clearer understanding of the terms 'extremism' and 'terrorism' and their own opinions in relation to these key terms and would be more likely to challenge what they see on social media.

The school will now look at how to roll these lessons out across all the schools in the Bohunt Multi-Academy Trust.

Next steps

To embed these lessons within the Citizenship programme for Year 9 pupils and extend to 5 or 6 lessons. As a result of feedback from pupils, the school will be looking at how it can give them the opportunity to discuss these issues earlier in the curriculum and explore opportunities for cross-curricular work, especially with the English department.