

Protecting Children from Radicalisation and Extremism Policy and Guidance



Groveside
School

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PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM POLICY AND GUIDANCE

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Terminology

Please note that the terms “our teams” and “team member/s” include everyone working with the people in Outcomes First Group’s services in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, consultants, agency staff and contractors.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The safety and wellbeing of our children and young people is our highest priority and we are committed to ensuring they are effectively safeguarded from all forms of harm. We recognise the significant risk of radicalisation and extremism in today's world. Prevention, early identification and intervention are essential in preventing children and young people from being drawn into harmful ideologies that can have serious consequences for their safety and future. We recognise the increased risk for children and young people who are looked after, neurodivergent, or have additional needs and/or disabilities and remain vigilant in providing informed support and appropriate safeguards.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all of the settings and services in the Outcomes First Group.

Integrated education and care sites must ensure that their response to the risk and reality of radicalism and extremism is consistent across the setting and that all team members working with children and young people have the appropriate training and understanding to help protect them from radicalisation and extremism.

3.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy must be read in conjunction with national government guidance and relevant policies including:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Exploitation Policy
- Web Filtering & Monitoring policy
- Staying Safe Online Policy
- Mobile & Smart Technology Policy
- Serious Incident Notification Policy

Team members involved in recruitment must read and apply the Group's *Safer Recruitment Policy*

Regional Directors should also be aware of the Single Central Record Checklist Guidance & template.

Headteachers, Principals, Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), and other senior leaders must familiarise themselves with:

[CONTEST Strategy](#)

[The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation](#)

[A new definition of extremism 2024](#)

For schools:

[Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales](#) (especially paragraphs 57-76), or

The different UK nations have also provided the following resources:

[The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation](#) - England

4.0 TEAM MEMBERS RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

4.1 All team members must be safely recruited and have all relevant checks completed and on file. The Group's *Safer Recruitment Policy* must be followed.

4.2 All team members must complete the *Exploitation - An Introduction* course which includes information on Prevent and this must be refreshed every 3 years.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism** (as defined in the [Terrorism Act 2000](#)) is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
- **Extremism** is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, which aims to:
 - negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
 - undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
 - Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2). ([New definition of extremism \(2024\)](#))

6.0 WHAT IS THE PREVENT DUTY?

6.1 Prevent is part of the UK's overarching counter-terrorism strategy known as [CONTEST](#). The purpose of Prevent is to safeguard and support vulnerable people to stop them from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It aims to:

- Tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenges of terrorism;
- Safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention; identifying them and offering support; and
- Enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

6.2 Under Section 26 [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#), **schools, colleges and children's homes** in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This is known as the Prevent duty. Please see: [Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England & Wales/ Revised Prevent duty guidance for Scotland](#)

6.3 Team members have a duty to protect children and young people from the risks of radicalisation and extremism, as they would with any other form of exploitation. Team members must educate children and young people around the risks of radicalisation and extremism and ensure that they create a safe space where they are able to debate issues relating to radicalisation. This is part of educating them about the risks.

6.4 Settings must take a preventative approach to safeguarding children and young people by building their resilience and promoting fundamental British values. British values are defined as

democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. For further resources can be accessed at: [EducateAgainstHate](#)

6.5 In order to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential to be able to identify children and young people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children and young people from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children and young people from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), wherever these influences come from.

7.0 CHANNEL

7.1 In addition, Sections 36-41 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#), sets out a duty on local authorities and partners to establish and cooperate with a local [Channel Programme](#) (in England and Wales)/ [PMAP](#) in Scotland) to provide support for anybody vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

7.2 Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme through which individuals consent to receive support to address their vulnerabilities and reduce the risk to them. It focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required.

A representative from the setting may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

7.3 Team members should use their professional judgement in identifying children and young people who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the [Channel](#) Programme in England and Wales.

8.0 PREVENTING RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

8.1 Team members must work with and educate children and young people to help them develop understanding around the risks of radicalisation and ensure that they create a safe space where they are able to discuss issues relating to radicalisation and extremism.

8.2 Protecting children and young people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism must be part of the whole-setting approach to safeguarding. The Headteacher must ensure that the setting and its team members:

- strive to prevent radicalisation on a day-to-day basis;
- are alert to indications and risks ;
- have a curriculum that addresses the issues involved in radicalisation;
- and conduct is consistent with preventing radicalisation.

Any concerns about a team member in relation to radicalisation or extremism must be reported to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead and the Regional Director/Operational Director must be informed.

This should also be reported to safeguarding@ofgl.co.uk and peoplesadvice@ofgl.co.uk and the safeguarding process followed, which may include a Local Authority Designated Officer referral

8.3 Team members must be aware that radicalisation does not refer to any one religion or faith. Young people can be groomed into holding extremist views politically as well as religiously. Team members have a duty to promote an environment within the setting that is diverse and

multicultural, but extreme views and any expressions that single out a particular faith, religion, race or gender will not be tolerated. Team members must challenge any form of discriminatory language.

8.4 Headteachers, DSLs and Safeguarding Leads and senior leaders must ensure that their approach is in line with the [Contest Strategy](#) best practice guidance, and that the 'four P' approach is understood:

Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks.

Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack.

Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

8.5 Team members must have an awareness and understanding of radicalisation and that it is similar to other forms of exploitation and involves grooming and coercing young people, sometimes with violence and aggression being used. Team members must be able to protect vulnerable young people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk being radicalised.

9.0 RISK-BASED APPROACH

There is no single route to radicalisation and no single way to identify whether a child or young person is likely to be susceptible; background factors combined with specific influences, such as family and friends may contribute to a child's/young person's vulnerability. Radicalisation is not a linear process and can occur through many different methods and combinations of methods, such as, online, via social media or in settings, such as, within the home, local groups etc.

To safeguard children and young people who are vulnerable to radicalisation, DSLs/ Safeguarding Leads will need to take a risk-based approach and consider an individual's behaviour in the context of wider influencing factors and vulnerabilities.

9.1 Understanding the context

The DSL and Safeguarding Lead should understand the risk of radicalisation in their area and setting. This risk will vary greatly and can change quickly but nowhere is risk free.

The DSL and the Safeguarding Lead will engage with local safeguarding partners including the police, local authority and local and regional Prevent Co-ordinators (where applicable) to develop up-to-date understanding of the local risks and context.

'Peer relationships are increasingly influential during adolescence, setting social norms which inform young people's experiences, behaviours and choices and determine peer status. These relationships are, in turn, shaped by, and shape, the school, neighbourhood and online contexts in which they develop. So if young people socialise in safe and protective schools and community settings, they will be supported to form safe and protective peer relationships. However, if they form friendships in contexts characterised by violence and/or harmful attitudes these relationships too may be anti-social, unsafe or promote problematic social norms as a means of navigating, or surviving in, those spaces' (Contextual safeguarding Briefing, Carlene Firmann, 2017).

Young people's peer groups, communities and social media activity are either key risk factors or key protective factors. For example, if a young person socialises with peers who have a positive influence on their thinking and behaviours, this will more than likely protect them within their communities and neighbourhoods. Likewise, if young people socialise with peers who are

themselves involved in risky activities or who hold extremist views, this too may impact on the young person's safety and wellbeing in the community and their neighbourhoods.

9.2 Potential indicators of risk

Schools, colleges and children's homes have a duty to assess the risk presented to children and young people in their settings around the risks of being drawn into extremism. Team members must be aware of children and young people's vulnerabilities, their family contexts as well as the risks in the local communities. There are often several risk factors present that, when seen together, can cause concern. Team members must have an understanding of how to recognise and support those who are at risk of extremism.

There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism. The process of radicalisation is different for everyone and can take place over an extended period or within a very short timeframe. Some of the known ways that children and young people can be drawn into violence, or can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups include:

- Through the influence of family members or friends
- Direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or extremist literature
- Grooming – where the vulnerabilities of a young person are exploited to form an exclusive friendship which draws the young person away from other influences that might challenge the radical ideology.
- Through the internet and social media, which may normalise radical views and promote content that is shocking and extreme. Children and young people can be trusting and may not necessarily appreciate bias, which can lead to being drawn into such groups and to adopt their extremist views.

Personal vulnerabilities or local factors can make a young person more susceptible to extremist messages, including:

- Sense of not belonging or struggling with their sense of identity
- Behavioural problems or difficulties socialising
- Emotional difficulties, lack of self-esteem
- Issues at home or family issues
- Criminal activity/ Being involved with gangs
- Becoming distanced from their cultural or religious background
- Questioning their place in society
- Experiencing a traumatic event
- Experiencing racism or discrimination and/or community tension
- Lacking empathy, difficulty in understanding the consequences of their actions
- Events affecting the country or region where they or their parents are from
- Socialising with friends or family who have joined extremist groups.
- Exposure to one-sided points of view

As with managing other safeguarding risks, team members should be alert to changes in children and young people's behaviours which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- Making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (involvement via online groups, narratives, programmes and networks may be less apparent)
- Secretive behaviour, losing interest in friends and activities
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- Graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- Advocating violence and/or messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups

The Government provides a list of terrorist groups or organisations banned under UK law, and details of proscription criteria. [Proscribed terror groups or organisations](#)

It is important that team members are aware of children and young people's vulnerabilities, their family contexts and the risks in the local communities and understand how to support those at risk.

Team members must always be alert to **changes** in children and young people's behaviours which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Please also see:

[Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting](#) for further information about risk indicators, and

[Understanding and identifying radicalisation risk in your education setting](#) for further information on the push and pull factors that can make a learner at risk of extremism or radicalisation.

10.0 PREVENT DUTY SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

DFE have produced a self-assessment tool to help schools and colleges in England review their responsibilities under the Prevent duty, which can be found here: [Prevent duty self-assessment tool for schools](#)

The Welsh Government provides the [Respect and resilience self-assessment tool for schools](#)

The tools helps schools and colleges to understand how well embedded their existing policies and practices are, and to encourage a cycle of continuous review and improvement. They contain requirements and recommend good practice activities to meet those requirements.

11.0 ONLINE SAFETY

Please also see *Staying Safe Online, Web Filtering and Monitoring Policy, Gaming Devices Guidance*

11.1 Children and young people do not need to meet people to become involved in extremist views and beliefs. The internet and the use of social media is increasingly being used by extremist groups to radicalise young people. These groups will often offer young people solutions to their feelings of being misunderstood, not listened to, or being treated unfairly.

11.2 The setting has an appropriate web filtering system in place and a clear policy on the use of *Mobile and Smart Technology* in school/college. Team members working in children's homes and residential schools should also be familiar with the *Mobile Device, Smart Technology, and Internet Access Policy* that will apply outside of school/college hours. Team members must be vigilant when children and young people are using their mobile phones and other devices. Any concerns about content must be reported immediately to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead.

11.3 The Headteacher must ensure that there are arrangements in place for the monitoring of children and young people's use of the internet. Any concerns regarding inappropriate or unsafe internet use must be immediately reported to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead and documented onto the electronic recording system. Please see the Web Filtering Policy.

11.4 All team members must ensure that children and young people in their settings are supported and helped to understand about staying safe online. Please see the Staying Safe Online Policy.

12.0 WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS

If a child/ young person or others are in immediate danger, you must phone the Police 999 immediately.

12.1 The DSL/ Safeguarding Lead must ensure that team members understand the issues of radicalisation and extremism, that they are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and extremism and know how to refer their concerns. The DSL/Safeguarding Lead must receive all safeguarding concerns about children and young people in the setting who may be vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation or are showing signs of radicalisation.

The DSL is the main point of contact for referring concerns about radicalisation to the appropriate agencies, including Prevent. (Please also see 13.0 Local Procedures below).

12.2 The DSL/Safeguarding Lead must report any concerns or issues regarding radicalisation to the Chair of Governors for the school, **Chris Groom**. The Group Head of Safeguarding/Safeguarding Adviser must also be informed of any concerns by emailing safeguarding@ofgl.co.uk

12.3 The DSL/Safeguarding Lead must ensure that they are aware of any local or community issues which may impact on possible radicalisation. They must ensure that they share any local information with team members.

12.4 Team members throughout the setting must understand the issues of radicalisation and extremism be able to recognise the signs of vulnerability, radicalisation and extremism.

12.5 Team members must refer all concerns about children and young people who show signs of vulnerability or radicalisation to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead within **one working day**.

12.6 If there are immediate concerns regarding the safety of a child or young person, team members must report concerns to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead immediately where they will be supported to refer their concerns to the police. All concerns must be documented on the electronic recording system. When there are significant concerns about a child or young person, the DSL/Safeguarding Lead in liaison with the Headteacher will make a referral to the local Prevent Team.

12.7 The Serious Incident Notification Policy outlines the expectations of the internal process for notifying serious incidents to senior leaders and the Executive Team. There are different versions of the policy for Education and for Children's Homes. Team members must be familiar with these policies and ensure they followed.

13.0 LOCAL PROCEDURES

The DSL (and any deputies)/Safeguarding Lead must be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral. The local procedures are:

Reading – Where do I go for help ? - [National Prevent referral form](#)

[Helping Prevent terrorism and extremism - Reading Borough Council](#)

If emergency services are required, call 999. Take responsible steps to ensure that there is no immediate danger.

Children's Single Point of Access, Tel: **0118 937 3641**, 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).

Outside these hours, contact the Emergency Duty Service (EDS) on **01344 351999**

Wokingham – Where do I go for help ? [National Prevent referral form](#)

Hampshire – Where do I go for help ? [National Prevent Referral Form](#)

[About PREVENT • Hampshire PREVENT Partnership Board](#)

Oxfordshire – Where do I go for help ? [National Prevent referral form](#)

[Safeguarding vulnerable people from extremism | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

14.0 FURTHER HELP AND RESOURCES

More resources and practical advice can be found at:

- [ACT - Action Counters Terrorism](#)
- The Active Change Foundation (ACF) provides a confidential helpline to prevent British nationals from travelling to conflict zones. ACF Confidential helpline telephone number is **020 8539 2770**
- The Anti-Terrorist Hotline is **0800 789 321**
- Crime Stoppers can be called anonymously on **0800 555111**