

Waterbeach Community Primary School



Prevent Strategy

Written Sept 2024 (by Neil Lloyd – Headteacher and Prevent lead)
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Introduction

Coming into force in 2015, Prevent is one of the 4 elements of CONTEST, the Government's counter-terrorism strategy (the other elements being: Pursue, Protect and Prepare).

The Prevent strategy aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism which is defined in the UK as 'The use or threat of serious violence against a person or serious damage to property where that action is: designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public or a section of the public'.

The focus of Prevent is on the significant threat posed by international terrorism and those in the UK who are inspired by it. But it is also concerned with reducing threats, risks and vulnerabilities posed by domestic extremists such as those from the far right and far left, extreme animal rights activists and those involved in Northern Irish related terrorism. Contextually, Waterbeach Community Primary School is most at risk from radicalisation associated with far-right and animal rights ideologies.

Prevent is supported by three objectives:

- Responding to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it (ideology);
- Preventing people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support (individuals); and
- Working with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address (institutions).

The Prevent Duty requires schools and Local Authorities to work together to counter all forms of terrorism and non-violent extremism, and to safeguard individuals at risk of radicalisation.

We have a Prevent Plan which includes actions to support staff to recognise and address concerns about individuals (children and adults) at risk of radicalisation, as well as groups who may present a threat.

We follow the government's 2023 guidance on 'Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting'.

Teaching and learning

Proactively, teaching and learning aims to address issues around radicalisation. We use the Cambridgeshire PSHE Scheme and the Teach Computing scheme. Learning progressions teach the children about conduct, safe relationships and what to do if they are worried. Other subjects also present learning that counters radical ideology narratives.

Identification of risks

The journey to becoming radicalised is different for everyone and there are many reasons why someone becomes vulnerable. Radicalisation can take place very quickly, or over a long period of time. However, there are certain behaviours we are trained to recognise.

In the first instance, we speak with learners and their parents or carers and consider contextual, vulnerability and protective factors to make a comprehensive assessment of risk and harm.

Low risk

Low risk means there's no evidence to suggest the learner is susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Low risk behaviours, when seen alone, would not necessarily need to be explored further.

Low risk behaviours include:

- holding strong opinions or values (non-violent or non-extremist)
- criticising government policies
- adopting visible signs, for example wearing clothing (non-violent or non-extremist), to express identity or sense of belonging
- being active on social media
- taking a keen interest in national and international affairs
- demonstrating support and supporting causes, for example animal rights (non-violent)
- showing new interest in a political ideology or religion
- holding or expressing conservative values or practices, whether traditional, cultural or religious (unless they cause harm to a child or others, for example female genital mutilation)

Low risk: what to do

Where there is low risk, we should think about:

- talking informally to the learner about the changes in their behaviour
- providing an opportunity to debate controversial issues in a safe space
- offering information about how to keep safe online

Educate Against Hate has [resources for schools to safeguard students](#) and Education and Training Foundation has [resources for FE providers](#).

The [Prevent duty guidance](#) says that schools and FE providers should be safe spaces in which learners can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and to learn how to challenge these ideas.

Regular Prevent training will help staff understand what radicalisation means and why learners may be susceptible to becoming a terrorist or supporting terrorism.

For an example of managing a low risk concern, see [case study 4: responding to extremism concerns in the classroom](#).

At risk

A learner at risk may be showing behaviours that could increase their risk and vulnerability to radicalisation.

If a learner is showing at risk behaviour, we should explore this further to see if we need to make a Prevent referral.

At risk behaviour includes:

- being drawn to conspiracy theories
- beginning to isolate themselves from family and friends
- viewing or engaging with inappropriate online content and having uncontrolled or unsupervised access to the internet
- expressing concerns about being victimised, for example feeling under attack
- discriminating against other individuals or groups of people
- a sudden change in behaviour
- showing interest in extremists or extreme groups
- expressing views that divide us, for example talking about 'us' and 'them'

At risk: what to do

If we think a learner is at risk, we should look at their behaviour and gather all the information we need to make a full assessment of risk and harm.

We should ask ourself:

- if we have enough information to make a comprehensive assessment
- what's happened in the past to trigger the incident
- if this is an isolated incident or a pattern of behaviour
- what else we know and if there any relevant vulnerability factors
- if there are any relevant contextual factors - for example, previous safeguarding concerns, behaviour, attendance, attainment, general wellbeing
- if there are any protective factors - for example, supportive personal relationships with peers and family, environmental factors such as school, college, provider or home life

We should:

- talk to the learner in a safe space - see [how to speak to a learner susceptible to radicalisation](#)
- talk to the parents or carers (if under 18) about our concerns - see 'informing the child, young person, parents or carers' in [making a referral to Prevent](#)
- make a holistic assessment of vulnerability, examining risk and protective factors as set out on page 15 of [working together to safeguard children](#)

If we need to make a Prevent referral, we can ask Prevent partners for advice and support.

When asking for advice, we do not need to identify the learner. Keep a written record of all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.

If we're in any doubt, [make a Prevent referral](#).

If we think the risk is escalating, follow our Prevent referral procedures and read the guidance for medium or high-risk cases.

Medium risk

Medium risk means a learner is at heightened risk of radicalisation. There may be several indicators of risk.

If the learner is at risk of harm, we should [make a Prevent referral](#) immediately.

Medium risk behaviour includes:

- legitimising the use of violence to defend ideology or cause
- accessing extremist or terrorist websites, forums and publications
- expressing dehumanising views
- expressing an interest to travel to a conflict zone
- being in contact with a group or individuals known to support a violent extremist ideology, either online or in real life
- expressing persistent intolerance towards groups of people perceived as 'other' - this may be based on protected characteristics such as gender, religion or ethnicity, but not exclusively
- demonstrating a fixation with weaponry or explosives (this may include posing in concerning photographs or videos with weaponry), without an otherwise reasonable explanation
- being obsessed with massacre, or extreme or mass violence, without targeting a particular group (for example, high school shootings)

Medium risk: what to do

If we suspect a learner is at medium risk, we should assess their vulnerability and examine the risk and protective factors as set out in the statutory guidance on [working together to safeguard children](#).

We ask:

- if there's reasonable cause to suspect that the learner is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm
- what the risks are and what would happen if these needs are not met - what the impact will be on the learner - what we're worried about
- what else we know and if there are any relevant vulnerability factors

- if there are any relevant contextual factors - for example, previous safeguarding concerns, behaviour, attendance and attainment records and general wellbeing
- if there are any protective factors - for example, supportive personal relationships with peers and family, environmental factors such as school, college, provider or home life

If the learner is suffering from or is at risk of harm including vulnerability to radicalisation, we should act immediately and follow our internal safeguarding policy, including the designated safeguarding lead considering making a [referral to Prevent](#) . We may contact Prevent partners for advice or forward the referral on to Channel as appropriate.

Channel is a multi-agency partnership that supports people identified as at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Channel focuses on early intervention to provide support at an early stage. To find out more, read 'Channel support' in [making a referral to Prevent](#).

We should also carry out an assessment to identify whether any needs should be met by more than one agency, for example child and adolescent mental health services. If we're not sure if we should do this, our local authority may suggest this when we make the Prevent referral.

When we share information about a child or young person who is under 18, we should try to get parental consent but only if it is safe to do so. Do not put the child or young person in more danger. For more guidance, read 'informing the child, young person, parents or carers' in [making a referral to Prevent](#).

To find out more, read the [case studies](#), which involve different ideologies, issues, age ranges and examples of interventions.

High risk

High risk means a learner is at significant risk. There's evidence that they're currently exposed to terrorist or extremist activity and there's a significant risk to their safety.

If they're showing high risk, criminal behaviour, tell the police immediately.

High risk, criminal behaviour includes:

- verbally or physically attacking someone due to their race, religion, sexuality and so on
- committing violent acts guided by a violent extremist ideology or group
- taking part in any proscribed violent extremist group (financing, sharing material online, recruiting others and so on)
- having a 'kill list' or detailed plan to carry out mass violence
- producing or sharing terrorist material offline or online

- recruiting others to a proscribed terrorist group or organisation

High risk: what to do

We ask if the learner:

- needs support from more than one agency
- is about to put themselves or others in danger
- is at risk due to actions of their parents or carers, or wider family members
- has made violent threats to our setting

Tell the police immediately if we suspect a learner:

- is about to put themselves or others in danger by travelling to join a proscribed organisation, or
- appears to be involved in planning to carry out a criminal offence

If we suspect a learner is likely to commit an attack on our setting, contact the police and local authority for immediate support.

To find out how to keep our setting safe, read the [school and college security](#) guidance.

Interest in targeted violence

If a learner supports the use of violence but is not particularly interested in an extremist ideology, or is interested in lots of ideologies, we should:

- follow our usual safeguarding arrangements
- ask our local authority or Prevent team for support or advice

If we need to, [make a Prevent referral](#).

This includes if the learner is interested in:

- multiple ideologies, such as white supremacy and involuntary celibates (incels)
- targeted violence - wanting to kill members of staff or other learners

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How to report or share a concern

Safeguarding

One of the key requirements of the Prevent Duty is that staff know how to identify people at risk of radicalisation or extremism and the safeguarding pathways they should use. If you are concerned that an individual may be at risk of radicalisation, you should treat this as you would any other safeguarding issue; and escalate it using your normal, internal procedures, such as informing your safeguarding lead and/or LADO or by contacting the Prevent team: Prevent@cambs.pnn.police.uk or telephone 01480 422596

Reporting and addressing risks based on concerns around radicalisation come under the school's existing safeguarding practice. We use good safeguarding practice and we use MyConcern to record concerns and actions. Adults build relationships with the children through their professional interactions and are able to notice any concerns. All staff receive regular safeguarding training, including KCSI updates, each year.

We do not make assumptions about the learner's behaviour based on any aspects of their background or identity. We are proactive and avoid direct confrontation of opinions or attitudes. We seek to redirect them and start by raising concerns about their behaviour – not their beliefs. We recognise that Handling difficult or controversial discussions can be challenging. We get the learner to think about what they're saying and practice empathy by finding ways to understand the concerns.

Special provisions considered to support conversations with learners who:

- have communication difficulties
- are too young
- are unable to communicate
- cannot or will not explain

We refer to any learner's behaviour plan and the information available from any assessments. This may include visual cues to help facilitate discussion, such as picture exchange communication cards. The Inclusion Manager is also a DDSL.

We keep a written record of all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.

Emergencies

If we suspect that someone is about to put themselves in danger by travelling to join a terrorist organisation, or appears involved in plans to commit a criminal offence, inform the police immediately by calling [999](tel:999).

Further resources

- Further resources on Prevent and free training modules can be found on the [Home Office website](#).

- Visit [ACT Early](#) to find out more about the signs that someone may be vulnerable to radicalisation.
- The National Autistic Society has also published [tips to communicate more effectively with an autistic person](#)