

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM RADICALISATION

POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Acorn Park School

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Protecting Children from Radicalisation Policy and Guidance

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1.0 Introduction

Outcomes First Group gives safeguarding the highest priority at all times.

The Group recognises the growing risk in relation to the radicalisation and extremism of vulnerable young people, particularly those who are looked after or have emotional and/or mental health difficulties. For this reason, the Group has high expectations in relation to the safeguarding of young people in our care, and the prevention of radicalisation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Group's Safeguarding Policy.

2.0 Preventing Radicalisation

2.1 Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation must be part of the school's safeguarding approach. The Head Teacher/Head of Service must ensure that the school and its staff respond to preventing radicalisation on a day-to-day basis; that the school's curriculum addresses the issues involved in radicalisation and that staff conduct is consistent with preventing radicalisation.

2.2 Head Teachers and DSLs 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.

2.3 Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

2.4 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 must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

2.5 Extremism is defined in the 2011 Prevent strategy as 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

3.0 What is the Prevent Duty?

3.1 From 1 July 2015, all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, 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.

3.2 Staff must have an awareness and understanding of radicalisation and be able to protect vulnerable young people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of

being radicalisation being radicalised. There is no single way to identify whether a child is likely to be susceptible; background factors combined with specific influences, such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Radicalisation can occur through many different methods, such as, social media or the internet or in settings, such as, within the home. Radicalisation is similar to other forms of exploitation and involves grooming and coercing young people, sometimes with violence and aggression being used.

- 3.3** School's have a duty to protect pupils from the risks of radicalisation, as they would with any other form of exploitation. Staff must educate pupils around the risks of radicalisation and ensure that they create a safe space where pupils are able to debate issues relating to radicalisation. This is part of educating them about the risks.
- 3.4** School's must take a preventative approach to safeguarding pupil's 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 to use with pupils in the classroom staff can access <https://educateagainsthate.com/>
- 3.5** Staff must remember that radicalisation does not refer to just one religion or faith. Young people can be groomed into holding extremist views politically as well as religiously. Staff have a duty to ensure that they promote an environment within the school that is diverse and multicultural, but where views which are outside of mainstream society and which single out a particular faith, religion, race or gender will not be tolerated. Staff must challenge any form of discriminatory language.

4.0 Training and information

- 4.1** All staff must read;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) Part 1 (or Annex A if appropriate).
 - Outcomes First Group Safeguarding Policy
 - Outcomes First Group Web Filtering policy
 - Safer recruitment policy
 - [**CONTEST Strategy 2018**](#)
- 4.2** Head Teacher/Head of Services, Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and other senior leaders in schools must read:
[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 \(updated December 2020\)](#)
[Protecting Children from Radicalisation: the Prevent Duty \(2015\)](#) and familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales](#), (updated April 2021) especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools.
Where post 16 provision is offered the [Prevent Duty Guidance for Further-Education Institutions in England and Wales](#) (updated April 2021) must also be read.

- 4.3** All staff must have training around radicalisation and Prevent.

5.0 Risk Assessing

- 5.1** '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).

5.2 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.

5.3 Schools have a duty to assess the risk presented to pupils in their schools around the risks of being drawn into extremism. This means that staff must be aware of pupil's vulnerabilities, their family contexts as well as the risks in the local communities. Staff must have an understanding of how to support those pupil's who are at risk or extremism.

5.4 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
- Issues at home or family issues
- Lack of self-esteem
- 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
- Lacking empathy
- Difficulty in understanding the consequences of their actions
- Community tension
- 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

5.5 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 outside college
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent)
- Secretive behaviour

- 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 towards others

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviours which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

6.0 Online Safety

- 6.1** Children 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.
- 6.2** All staff must read the Outcomes First Group's Staying Safe Online Policy and Web Filtering Policy. The school has an appropriate web filtering system in place. Each school should have a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology and staff must be vigilant when pupils use their mobile phones. Any concerns of website content must be reported immediately to the DSL.
- 6.3** The Head Teacher/Head of Service must ensure that there are arrangements in place for the monitoring of pupils use of the internet. Any concerns regarding inappropriate or unsafe internet use must be immediately reported to the DSL and documented onto the schools electronic recording system.
- 6.4** All staff must ensure that pupils are supported and helped to understand about keeping safe online.

7.0 Local Procedures

- 7.1 The DSL (and any deputies) must be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral. The local procedures are**
Norfolk - <https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/pupil-safety-and-behaviour/safeguarding/prevent-duty-terrorism>
Suffolk - <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/protecting-people-at-risk-of-abuse/supporting-people-at-risk-of-radicalisation/>
If a student lives in a different county to Norfolk or Suffolk, that county local authority guidelines should be followed.
- 7.2** Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the **Channel** programme.
- 7.3 Channel** is a voluntary, confidential support programme which 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 school 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. Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel Guidance](#)

8.0 What to do if you have concerns

- 8.1** The DSL must ensure that staff understand the issues of radicalisation, that they are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns. The DSL must receive all safeguarding concerns about pupils 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.**
- 8.2** The DSL must report any concerns or issues regarding radicalisation to the Chair of Governors for the school, Nick Simpson and Senior Leadership Team meetings. The Group Head of Safeguarding must also be informed of any concerns.
- 8.3** The DSL 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 the staff team.
- 8.4** Staff must understand the issues of radicalisation and be able to recognise the signs of vulnerability and radicalisation.
- 8.5** Staff must refer all concerns about students who show signs of vulnerability or radicalisation to the DSL within one working day.
- 8.6** If there are immediate concerns regarding the safety of the pupil, staff must report concerns to the DSL immediately where they will be supported to refer their concerns to the police. All concerns must be documented on the schools electronic recording system. When there are significant concerns about a student, the DSL in liaison with the Head Teacher/Head of Service will make a referral to the local Prevent team.