



Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

Related documents include:

- DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2023
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018
- DCSF Resources 'Learning together to be safe'
- 'Prevent: Resources Guide'
- DfE's 'Teaching Approaches that help Build Resilience to Extremism among Young People'

Legal Status:

- The Prevent Duty June 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2019
- Counter-terrorism Act 2000

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal
- The Principal will undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.
- The next official date for review is **September 2025**

Introduction

The current threat from Terrorism and Extremism in the United Kingdom is substantial and can involve the exploitation of vulnerable people, including children to involve them in extremist activity.

At our College, we encourage pupils to respect the fundamental 'British' values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Due to the highly international composition of our students, we promote these as universally valid values. We ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school and where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to pupils.

We value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our college's values. Both pupils and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

We seek to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

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The College is committed to providing a secure environment for students, where students feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at the school recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for students or not.

This Policy is one element within our overall school arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in the line with our statutory duties set out at S157 of the Education Act 2002.

This policy is designed to provide a clear guidance for every member of staff with which to respond to safeguarding concerns for those children and young people who may be vulnerable to the messages of extremism. In addition it provides details of the local inter agency process and expectations in identifying appropriate interventions based on the child concern model/ threshold of need and intervention model and the Channel process.

College Ethos and Practice

When operating this Policy, the college uses the following

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

“Extremism is 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” (*HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011*)

Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

As a college we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for students and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set in our Policy. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge the extremist views we are failing to protect our students.

Furthermore, we are aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which emanate from variety of sources and media, including via the internet, and at times learners may themselves reflect or display views that may be discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language.

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Curriculum

Abbey College believe in promoting the ethos of tolerance and respect for all. This will be carried out through delivering a broad curriculum using teaching methods and lessons. PSHE is delivered to the whole student body twice a week. Global citizenship is also taught across all ages. Both subjects allow personal values and beliefs to be discussed in a safe environment enabling our students to become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalized.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities college staff will be alert to:

- Disclosures by learners of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of college, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where learners have not actively sought these out.
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Learners accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Partner colleges, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting learners in other colleges or settings
- Learners voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives
- Use of extremist or "hate" terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views

Our college will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority

Therefore, the college will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that out students are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalized.

We will develop strategies and staff training to ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it.

Equality and Diversity

All developments are intended to ensure that no-one is treated in any way less favourably on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic or social origin, race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, age, religion/ belief or political/ other personal beliefs.

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National Guidance and Strategies

CONTEST is the Governments counter terrorist strategy, its aim to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism.

PREVENT is a key part of the CONTEST strategy, its aim is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Early intervention is at the heart of “Prevent” in diverting people away from being drawn into terrorist activity. “Prevent” happens before any criminal activity takes place. It is about recognising, supporting and protecting people who might be susceptible to radicalisation.

The Prevent Strategy objectives are:

- ***Ideology*** - respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
- ***Individuals*** - prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support;
- ***Institutions*** - work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.

CHANNEL is a key element of the “Prevent” strategy and is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners (such as the education and health sectors, social services, children’s and youth services and offender management services), the police and the local community to:

- identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism;
- assess the nature and extent of that risk; and
- develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Channel is about safeguarding children and adults from being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity. It is about early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before illegality occurs.

Understanding and Recognising Risks and Vulnerabilities of Radicalisation Principles

A **child** is defined in the *Children Acts* 1989 and 2004 as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Children and young people can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These can include through the influence of family members or friends and/or direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or, increasingly, through the internet. This can put a young person at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to cause **significant harm**.

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Children and young people are vulnerable to exposure to, or involvement with, groups or individuals who advocate violence as a means to a political or ideological end. Examples of extremist causes that have used violence to achieve their ends include animal rights, the far right, internal terrorist and international terrorist organisations; Most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in extremism.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as extremism. It is important to consider these factors in order to develop an understanding of the issue. It is also necessary to understand those factors that build resilience and protect individuals from engaging in violent extremist activity.

Safeguarding children and young people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm.

Indicators for vulnerability to radicalisation are:

- family tensions
- sense of isolation
- migration
- distance from cultural heritage
- experience of racism or discrimination
- feeling of failure etc.

Those in the process of being radicalised may become involved with a new group of friends, search for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging, possess extremist literature or advocate violence actions, change their behaviour and language, seek to recruit others to an extremist ideology.

It is important to note that children and young people experiencing these situations or displaying these behaviours are not necessarily showing signs of being radicalised. There could be many other reasons for the behaviour including those you are already familiar with alcohol or drug abuse, family breakdown, domestic abuse, bullying etc. or even something more minor.

It is important to be cautious in assessing these factors to avoid inappropriately labelling or stigmatising individuals because they possess a characteristic or fit a specific profile.

It is vital that all professionals who have contact with vulnerable individuals are able to recognise those vulnerabilities and help to increase safe choices.

The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that practitioners exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified.

Vulnerability/ Risk Indicators

NB - The following lists are not exhaustive and all or none may be present in individual cases of concern. Nor does it mean that vulnerable people/ young people experiencing these factors are automatically at risk of exploitation for the purposes of extremism. The accepted view is that a complex relationship between the

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various aspects of an individual's identity determines their vulnerability to extremism. Over-simplified assessments based upon demographics and poverty indicators have consistently demonstrated to increase victimisation, fail to identify vulnerabilities and, in some cases, increase the ability of extremists to exploit, operate and recruit.

There is no such thing as a 'typical extremist' and those involved in extremism come from a range of backgrounds and experiences. The following indicators have been provided to support professionals in NL to understand and identify factors that may suggest a child, young person or their family may be vulnerable or involved with extremism.

Vulnerability

- **Identity Crisis** - Distance from cultural/ religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them
- **Personal Crisis** – Family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- **Personal Circumstances** – Migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- **Unmet Aspirations** – Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- **Criminality** – Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/ reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups

Access to extremism / extremist influences

- Is there reason to believe that the child/young person associates with those known to be involved in extremism - either because they associate directly with known individuals or because they frequent key locations where these individuals are known to operate? (e.g. the child/young person is the partner, spouse, friend or family member of someone believed to be linked with extremist activity)
- Does the child/young person frequent, or is there evidence to suggest that they are accessing the internet for the purpose of extremist activity? (e.g. Use of closed network groups, access to or distribution of extremist material, contact associates covertly via Skype/email etc.)
- is there reason to believe that the child/young person has been or is likely to be involved with extremist/ military training camps/ locations?
- Is the child/young person known to have possessed or is actively seeking to possess and/ or distribute extremist literature/ other media material likely to incite racial/ religious hatred or acts of violence?
- Does the child/young person sympathise with, or support illegal/illicit groups
- e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?
- Does the child/young person support groups with links to extremist activity but
- not illegal/illicit e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?

Experiences, Behaviours and Influences

- Has the child/ young person encountered peer, social, family or faith group rejection?

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- Is there evidence of extremist ideological, political or religious influence on the child/ young person from within or outside UK?
- Have international events in areas of conflict and civil unrest had a personal impact on the child/ young person resulting in a noticeable change in behaviour? It is important to recognise that many people may be emotionally affected by the plight of what is happening in areas of conflict (i.e. images of children dying) it is important to differentiate them from those that sympathise with or support extremist activity
- Has there been a significant shift in the child/ young person's behaviour or outward appearance that suggests a new social/political or religious influence?
- Has the child/ young person come into conflict with family over religious beliefs/lifestyle/ dress choices?
- Does the child/ young person vocally support terrorist attacks; either verbally or in their written work?
- Has the child/ young person witnessed or been the perpetrator/ victim of racial or religious hate crime or sectarianism?

Travel

- Is there a pattern of regular or extended travel within the UK, with other evidence to suggest this is for purposes of extremist training or activity?
- Has the child/ young person travelled for extended periods of time to international locations known to be associated with extremism?
- Has the child/ young person employed any methods to disguise their true identity? Has the child/ young person used documents or cover to support this?

Social Factors

- Does the child/ young person have experience of poverty, disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion?
- Does the child/ young person experience a lack of meaningful employment appropriate to their skills?
- Does the child/ young person display a lack of affinity or understanding for others, or social isolation from peer groups? Does the child/ young person demonstrate identity conflict and confusion normally associated with youth development?
- Does the child/ young person have any learning difficulties/ mental health support needs?
- Does the child/ young person demonstrate a simplistic or flawed understanding of religion or politics?
- Does the child/ young person have a history of crime, including episodes in prison?
- Is the child/young person a foreign national, refugee or awaiting a decision on their immigration/ national status?
- Does the child/ young person have insecure, conflicted or absent family relationships?
- Has the child/ young person experienced any trauma in their lives, particularly any trauma associated with war or sectarian conflict?
- Is there evidence that a significant adult or other in the child/young person's life has extremist view or sympathies?

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Articulating support for extremist causes or leaders
- Accessing extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element

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- Possessing extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour

Referral and intervention process

Any member of staff who identifies such concerns, for example as a result of observed behaviour or reports of conversations to suggest the child/ young person supports terrorism and/ or extremism, must report these concerns to the Principal.

The Principal will consider whether a situation may be so serious that an emergency response is required. Professional judgement and common sense should be used to identify whether an emergency situation applies.

We will help support pupils who may be vulnerable to influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a student is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences we will ensure that the student is offered assistance. Additionally in such instances our college will seek external support from Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

Examples in relation to extremism are expected to be very rare but would apply when there is information that a violent act is imminent, or where weapons or other materials may be in the possession of a young person, another member of their family or within the community. **In this situation, a 999 call should be made.**

Some children/ young people who are at risk of being drawn into extremist activity may pose a risk to others. There must not be a conflict between the welfare needs of the child/ young person and the victim. Agencies have a duty to safeguard both.

Whistleblowing

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation Staff will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to Whistle blow or raise any issue in confidence.

Please refer to the separate Whistleblowing Policy.

Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our college will follow government guidance for safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked and that we complete and maintain a single central record of such vetting checks.

We will apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general and in doing so will deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement.

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We will be alert to the possibility that persons may seek to gain positions within our college so as to unduly influence our college's character and ethos. We are aware that such persons seek to limit the opportunities for our learners thereby rendering them vulnerable to extremist views and radicalisation as a consequence.

Therefore, by adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an on-going culture of vigilance within our college and staff team we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

Parents/carers will be issued with a hard copy of this Policy on request. This Policy will also be made available via College's website.

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