



Anti-radicalisation Policy and Prevent Strategy

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Introduction

From 1 July 2015 all schools , registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers 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 duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies. Bodies to which the duty applies must have regard to the statutory guidance.

The Prevent duty: what it means for childcare providers

In order for childcare providers to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and childcare providers' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

Childcare providers can also build resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. For early years childcare providers, the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage sets standards for learning, development and care for children from 0-5, thereby assisting their personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world.

Ofsted's revised common inspection framework for education, skills and early years, which comes into effect from 1 September 2015, makes specific reference to the need to have safeguarding arrangements to promote pupils' welfare and prevent radicalisation and extremism. The associated handbooks for inspectors set out the expectations for different settings. The common inspection framework and handbooks are available on GOV.UK.

The statutory guidance on the Prevent duty summarises the requirements on childcare providers in terms of four general themes:

- risk assessment;
- working in partnership;
- staff training; and
- IT policies.

Definitions

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.

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

British Values are democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Ethos

At Autism Bedfordshire we ensure that through our vision, values and rules we promote tolerance and respect for all cultures, faiths and lifestyles. This ethos is reflected and implemented effectively in policy and practice and there are effective risk assessments in place to safeguard and promote the children's welfare.

Related policies

- ICT Policy
- Safeguarding Policy for Children
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- Behaviour Code of Conduct
- Visitors Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedure

Roles and responsibilities

Role of the Board of Trustees

It is the role of the Board of Trustees to ensure that Autism Bedfordshire meets its statutory duties with regard to preventing radicalisation.

The Board of Trustees has a nominated person who will liaise with the CEO and other staff about issues to do with protecting children from radicalisation.

Role of the CEO

It is the role of the CEO to:

- ensure that Autism Bedfordshire and its staff respond to preventing radicalization on a day-to-day basis;
- ensure that staff conduct is consistent with preventing radicalisation.

Role of designated safeguarding lead

It is the role of the designated safeguarding lead to:

- ensure that staff understand the issues of radicalisation, are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns
- receive safeguarding concerns about children and young people who may be vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation or are showing signs of radicalization
- make referrals to appropriate agencies with regard to concerns about radicalisation
- liaise with partners, including the local authority and the police
- report to the governing body on these matters

Role of staff

It is the role of staff to understand the issues of radicalisation, are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns.

Risk assessment

The statutory guidance makes clear that childcare providers are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.

The general risks affecting children and young people may vary from area to area, and according to their age. Childcare providers are in an important position to identify risks within a given local context. It is important that childcare providers understand these risks so that they can respond in an appropriate and proportionate way. At the same time childcare providers should be aware of the increased risk of online radicalisation, as terrorist organisations such as ISIL seek to radicalise young people through the use of social media and the internet. The local authority and local police will be able to provide contextual information to help schools and childcare providers understand the risks in their areas.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. The Prevent duty does not require childcare providers to carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but as with any other safeguarding risk, they must take action when they observe behaviour of concern. Childcare providers should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for childcare settings to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty. General safeguarding principles apply to keeping children safe from the risk of radicalisation as set out in the relevant statutory guidance, Working together to safeguard children and Keeping children safe in education.

Childcare providers should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for making referrals where there are concerns that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Detailed guidance on Channel is available:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

An online general awareness training module on Channel is available. The module is suitable for school staff and other front-line workers. It provides an introduction to the topics covered by this advice, including how to identify factors that can make people vulnerable to radicalisation,

and case studies illustrating the types of intervention that may be appropriate, in addition to Channel.

Working in partnership

The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) are responsible for co-ordinating what is done by local agencies for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in their local area. Safeguarding arrangements should already take into account the policies and procedures of the LSCB. For example, LSCBs publish threshold guidance indicating when a child or young person might be referred for support.

Local authorities are vital to all aspects of Prevent work. In some priority local authority areas, Home Office fund dedicated Prevent co-ordinators to work with communities and organisations, including schools. Other partners, in particular the police and also civil society organisations, may be able to provide advice and support to schools on implementing the duty.

Effective engagement with parents / the family is also important as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms.

Staff training

The statutory guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. The Home Office has developed a core training product for this purpose – Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP). There are a number of professionals – particularly in safeguarding roles - working within Local Authorities, the Police, Health and Higher and Further Education who are accredited WRAP trained facilitators.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must undertake Prevent awareness training and be able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.

Staff will be given training to help them understand the issues of radicalisation, are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns. This information also forms part of induction safeguarding training.

Safer Recruitment

We ensure that the staff we appoint are suitable. Our recruitment procedures are rigorous. Vetting and barring checks are undertaken on all staff and volunteers (including trustees).

Internet safety

The statutory guidance makes clear the need to ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet. Suitable filtering should be in place.

Internet safety is an integral part of Autism Bedfordshire's Safeguarding Policy for Children. As with other online risks of harm, every member of staff needs to be aware of the risks posed by the online activity of extremist and terrorist groups.

Where staff, students or visitors find unblocked extremist content they must report it to a senior member of staff.

We are aware that children and young people have access to unfiltered internet when using their mobile phones and staff are alert to the need for vigilance when children are using their phones.

Children and staff know how to report internet content that is inappropriate or of concern.

Signs of vulnerability

There are no known definitive indicators that a young person is vulnerable to radicalisation, but there are number of signs that together increase the risk. Signs of vulnerability include:

- underachievement;
- being in possession of extremist literature;
- poverty;
- social exclusion;
- traumatic events;
- global or national events;
- religious conversion;
- change in behaviour;
- extremist influences;
- conflict with family over lifestyle;
- confused identify;
- victim or witness to race or hate crimes; and
- rejection by peers, family, social groups or faith.

Recognising extremism

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 school;
- 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 (but 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, art work or writing that displays extremist themes;
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others;
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views; and

- advocating violence towards others.

Building children's resilience to radicalisation

For childcare providers, 4Children, have published the following good practice examples demonstrating what promoting fundamental British Values means in the early years.

<http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/2015/03/fundamental-british-values-in-the-early-years/>

What to do if you have a concern

If a member of staff has a concern about a particular child they should follow Autism Bedfordshire's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the designated safeguarding lead, and where deemed necessary, with children's social care. In Prevent priority areas, the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support.

You can also contact your local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number). They can talk to you in confidence about your concerns and help you gain access to support and advice.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the governing body at least annually by receiving a report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This is not a statutory policy and will be reviewed at an appropriate time not later than two years after ratification by the governing body.