

## The “Prevent” Strategy for Schools

### Introduction

We are all aware of the growing incidence and threat of extremism and terrorism in support of a range of causes in the UK and throughout the world. In the UK hundreds of individuals have been radicalised to the point where they are prepared to actively support terrorism, engage in terrorist activity here, or travel to conflict zones to support or engage in terrorism. Many of you will have seen the recent sad case of Kadiza Sultana, a 15 year-old school girl from Bethnal Green Academy who became radicalised and ran away to join so called Islamic State in 2015. It is reported that once there she became a “jihadi bride”, but following the death of her husband she wanted to return to the UK but was too afraid to do for fear of reprisals if caught escaping – she is now believed to have been killed in a Russian air strike. The highest profile terrorist attacks in the West Midlands this decade were carried out in 2013 by Pavlo Lapshyn, a far-right terrorist who murdered Mohammed Saleem and went on to bomb 3 Mosques in the Black Country before his arrest and subsequent conviction.

Whilst the above are extreme cases our young people are potentially vulnerable to those who would actively radicalise and recruit folk to support a range of causes, with the most prevalent risks currently in the West Midlands relate to folk being drawn into extremism to support Islamism or the extreme right wing. It is therefore an important aspect of our schools’ safeguarding arrangements to try to prevent youngsters being radicalised and going on to engage in extremist or terrorist activity for whatever cause. In addition to which under the Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 all schools have a legal duty to have “*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*” (the duty).

### What do schools need to do?

Following the introduction of the duty on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 guidance for specified authorities has been issued by the Home Office and is available via the following link

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/445977/3799\\_Reviewed\\_Prevent\\_Duty\\_Guidance\\_England\\_Wales\\_V2-Interactive.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Reviewed_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf)

Also the department for Education has issued guidance specifically for schools that can be found at

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf)

However in summary schools must:

- **Assess the risk** of children being drawn into terrorism, demonstrating a general understanding of risks in the area and of how to identify individuals at risk and how to support them.

- **Work in partnership** with the local authority, police, families, and Safeguarding Children’s Board to support vulnerable youngsters.
- **Train all staff** (not just teachers) so that they are aware of and understand the dangers of radicalisation and know how to access appropriate support.
- Ensure that robust **ICT policies and filters** are in place to ensure that children are safe online.
- **Build pupils resilience** to radicalisation through appropriate discussion of the issues and promotion of British values.

### Support for schools

Since the introduction of the duty, Dudley’s schools have been provided with a range of support to safeguard our children and to comply with the duty. This support includes:

- “Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent” (WRAP) training has been offered to all Dudley schools, with over 90% take up during 2015/16.
- Schools are provided with bespoke advice and support where there are specific concerns about safeguarding vulnerable individuals.
- Through regular articles in the Schools’ Bulletin schools have been given advice and signposted to a range of training packages, online resources, and lesson plans to facilitate their compliance with the duty.

### Inspection

Effective safeguarding, including the Prevent duty, is now part of Ofsted’s safeguarding judgement – and this is a limiting grade so that if your safeguarding is “good” then “good” is the best that the school’s overall judgement can be. Judgements in relation to the Prevent duty including exemplifying and finding opportunities to promote British values in both effectiveness of leadership and management and personal development, behaviour and welfare of learners

As an indication of what inspectors will be looking for, a Dudley school inspected in February 2016 were given a “good” judgement and were able to evidence that in relation to prevent that:

- *Senior Leadership Team and Designated safeguarding Lead were all WRAP trained*
- *All staff had done appropriate online training*
- *Students were aware of how to raise concerns*
- *Safeguarding policies referenced prevent*

### What role can governors play?

Because governors are often active members of the local community they are ideally placed to understand issues that are affecting those communities. Experienced governors also understand that often issues in the local community can be brought into school by students and “play out” during the school day. If you are aware of issues relating to extremism you should contact the school

and advise staff appropriately so that they can use their professional judgement and expertise – it is inadvisable to attempt to address controversial issues in school as a governor, it should be left to the professionals with your support.

A key element of the role of governors is to hold the head teacher to account, and key questions to ask in relation to Prevent are:

- How is the school ensuring that it is keeping pupils safe from, and building their resilience to, the risks of extremism and radicalisation?
- What arrangements are in place to ensure that staff understand and are implementing the Prevent duty?

It is recommended that Prevent is not simply left with your “safeguarding governor” but is discussed at least annually at full governors. Where governors discuss Prevent in meetings you are advised to ensure that those discussions are in the minutes as evidence for inspectors.

“Managing Prevent in Schools” **training is available for governors** as part of the governor training support package; dates are available from the governor support team in Dudley.

John Hodt

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