



The Prevent Duty

‘Prevent’ is part of the government’s overall counter-terrorism strategy which is called CONTEST. The aim of Prevent is to reduce the threat from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The Prevent strategy has three specific objectives:

1. respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it
2. prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and Support
3. work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.

Prevent places a duty on early years settings to have ‘due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’. It is intended to deal with all kinds of terrorist threats to the UK, although the guidance acknowledges that currently the most significant threats come from Syria, Iraq and Al-Qaeda and associated groups, there is also a perceived continued threat posed from extreme right organisations.

What is expected?

The government expects early years settings to:

- establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of radicalisation
- ensure staff understand the risk and build the capabilities to deal with it
- communicate and promote the importance of the duty
- ensure staff implement the duty effectively.

What is extremism and radicalisation?

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.

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

Who may be at risk?

There is no one way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to terrorist ideology. If extremist views are held within a family unit, even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation and display concerning behaviour.

However, the evidence so far suggests that radicalisation often occurs as people search for identity, meaning and community. Childminders who care for older children should note that this is why young people may be particularly vulnerable.

Other factors that may have a bearing on someone becoming vulnerable may include:

- peer pressure
- influence from other people
- the internet/social media
- bullying
- crime against them or their involvement in crime
- anti-social behaviour
- family tensions
- race/hate crime
- lack of self-esteem
- personal or political grievances.

Professionals use a 'Vulnerability Assessment Framework' to guide their decisions about whether an individual needs support to address their vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism. It sets out three dimensions:

1. Engagement
2. Intent
3. capability.

1. Engagement

The engagement factors are sometimes referred to as 'psychological hooks'. They include the needs, susceptibilities, motivations and contextual influences that together can map an individual's pathway into terrorism.

They can include:

- feelings of grievance and injustice
- feeling under threat
- a need for identity, meaning and belonging
- a desire for status
- a desire for excitement and adventure
- a need to dominate and control others
- susceptibility to indoctrination
- a desire for political or moral change
- opportunistic involvement
- family or friends involvement in extremism
- being at a transitional time of life
- being influenced or controlled by a group
- relevant mental health issues.

2. Intent to cause harm

Not all those who become engaged by a group, cause or ideology go on to develop an intention to cause harm, so this dimension is considered separately.

Intent factors describe the mind-set that is associated with a readiness to use violence and address what the individual would do and to what end. They can include:

- over-identification with a group or ideology
- 'them and us' thinking
- an ability to dehumanise people they see as the enemy
- attitudes that justify offending
- preparedness to use harmful means to achieve an end
- harmful objectives.

3. Capability to cause harm

In the same way that not everyone who is engaged with terrorist ideals intends to cause harm, not all those who intend to cause harm are capable of doing so. Plots to cause widespread damage take a high level of personal capability, resources and networking to be successful. What an individual is capable of is therefore a key consideration for those who are tasked with assessing the risk of harm to the public.

Factors can include:

- individual knowledge, skills and competencies
- access to networks, funding or equipment
- criminal capability.

For example

The Government's counter-terrorism strategy is intended to deal with all kinds of terrorist threats to the United Kingdom. Particular attention is currently being given to significant threats from Syria, Iraq and Al-Qaeda and groups such as ISIL (also known as ISIS). However, practitioners should be aware that there is also a continued threat posed from extreme left and right wing political organisations within the UK.

The Prevent duty and you

The Prevent duty should be considered as a safeguarding issue, with the risk of radicalisation viewed as an additional threat to children and young people's safety and wellbeing. The Prevent duty does not require you to carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life, but as with any other safeguarding risk, you must take action if you observe behaviour that concerns you. This means that you must be able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks relating to children and young people of being drawn into terrorism in the local 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. This means referring concerns to the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) and the local Channel panel, who can offer a range of bespoke interventions aimed at diverting children and adults from being drawn into terrorism, such as discussing theology with an Iman.

Counter terrorism local profiles (CTLPs) have been developed by police for every local area and the expectation is that local authorities and organisations take account of these in relation to assessing the risk of people being drawn into terrorism in their areas and organisations.

People who work in early years settings are in an ideal position to build children's resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British Values. These values are not unique to Britain; they are universal aspirations for equality. As such they are fundamental to helping all children become compassionate, considerate adults who form part of a fair and equal society.

We demonstrate these values through the management and implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and through policies and procedures relating to equality, behaviour and safeguarding, with which the Prevent duty is entirely consistent.

We share these values, and that they are understood and applied by all staff, volunteers, and where appropriate, parents. It is important that we are able to advise and assist families who raise concerns and be able to point them in the right direction for support.

Ofsted inspections will assess the extent to which early years providers:

- actively promote British Values in the meaningful and age appropriate delivery of the EYFS
- comply with relevant legal duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998
- actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow any gaps in achievement between different groups of children
- ensure that safeguarding arrangements to protect children meet all statutory and other government requirements, promote their welfare and prevent radicalisation and extremism.

Failure to fulfil the Prevent duty may result in funding being withdrawn by the local authority.

To fulfil the Prevent duty, providers must ensure:

- They assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, and work in partnership with local partners such as the police, Prevent co-ordinators, children's social care and their LSCB, referring to counter terrorism local profiles to take account of local risks and respond appropriately.
- They focus on ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children, value other's views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.
- Staff are alert to harmful behaviours by influential adults in the child's life. This may include discriminatory and/or extremist discussions between parents, family and/or staff members.
- They assess their training needs in the light of their assessment of the risk and ensure trustees and/or committee members also access awareness training where relevant.
- They make a referral if there are concerns that an individual may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism or extremism.
- They take action when they observe behaviour of concern.

Support for individuals at risk

‘Channel’ is the name of 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 uses a multi-agency approach to:

- a. identify individuals at risk
- b. assess the nature and extent of the risk
- c. develop the most appropriate support plan for the individual concerned.

It provides a mechanism for providers to make referrals if they are concerned about an individual, although the individual’s engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

What to do if you have a concern

Our safeguarding policies have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. If there is a concern about a particular child or adult, in the first instance, we follow our normal safeguarding procedures and speak to our designated safeguarding lead or deputy. Where deemed necessary, the lead may discuss the matter with children’s social care. In Prevent priority areas, the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support.

The safeguarding lead may also contact the local police force or dial 101, the non-emergency number to talk in confidence and get support and advice.

The Department for Education has a dedicated telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to enable people to raise concerns relating to extremism directly, or in non-emergency situations, they can be emailed at: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

In summary

Radicalisation is a gradual process that happens over time, making it possible to intervene to steer people away from being drawn into terrorism.

The Prevent duty should be treated in the same way as any other safeguarding situation by reporting any concerns immediately to our Designated Safeguarding Lead. As with all risks of harm to children and young people, the most important thing is to remain aware and alert that these things can and do happen.