

**Outcomes
First
Group.**

Acorn Education Options Autism

Education and Care

Protecting Children from Radicalisation and Extremism

Policy & Guidance



Stretton Shires School

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**Protecting Children from Radicalisation and Extremism
Policy and Guidance**

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1.0 Introduction

Outcomes First Group puts the safety of the children and young people we educate and care for as the highest priority and is committed to ensuring they are effectively safeguarded. The Group recognises the growing risk in relation to radicalisation and extremism and that children and young people who are looked after, neurodivergent, have additional needs and/or disabilities can be particularly vulnerable.

For this reason, the Group has high expectations in relation to the safeguarding of young people in our care, and the prevention of radicalisation and extremism.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to the Group’s schools, colleges, children’s homes and integrated education and care settings in England, Wales and Scotland.

Integrated education and care sites and residential schools must ensure that their response to the risk and reality of radicalism and extremism is consistent across the setting and that all staff working with children and young people have the appropriate training and understanding to help protect them from radicalisation and extremism.

3.0 Policy Framework

This policy must be read in conjunction with national government guidance and relevant Home policies.

Staff involved in recruitment must read and apply the Group’s *Safer Recruitment Policy*

All staff working with children and young people must read and apply:

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- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#) (Part One or Annex A as appropriate).
- Safeguarding Policy
- Child Exploitation Policy
- Web Filtering & Monitoring policy
- Staying Safe Online Policy
- Mobile & Smart Technology Policy/ Mobile Device, Smart Technology, & Internet Access Policy
- Serious Incident Notification Policy
- [CONTEST Strategy 2023](#)

Headteachers or equivalent, Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), Registered Managers, Safeguarding Leads and other senior leaders must familiarise themselves with:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

[The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation](#) and familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales](#) (especially paragraphs 57-76), or [Revised Prevent duty guidance for Scotland](#) (especially paragraphs 44-56)

Where post 16 provision is offered the following Guidance must be read:

England and Wales – [Prevent Duty Guidance for Further-Education Institutions in England & Wales](#) or Scotland - [Prevent Duty Guidance for Further Education Institutions in Scotland](#)

The different UK nations have also provided the following resources:

[The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation](#) - England

[Respect and resilience developing-community cohesion](#) - Wales

[Safeguarding Prevent in Education](#) - Scotland

4.0 Staff recruitment and training

- 4.1** All staff must be safely recruited and have all relevant checks completed and on file. The Group's *Safer Recruitment Policy* must be followed.
- 4.2** All staff must complete the *Exploitation - An Introduction* course which includes information on Prevent and this must be refreshed every 3 years.

5.0 Definitions

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **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 is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
- **Extremism** is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, which aims to:
 - negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
 - undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
 - intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).
(updated from definition in the Prevent Duty 2011 [New definition of extremism \(2024\)](#))

6.0 What is the Prevent Duty?

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6.1 Prevent is part of the UK's overarching counter-terrorism strategy known as [CONTEST](#). The purpose of Prevent is to safeguard and support vulnerable people to stop them from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

It aims to:

- Tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenges of terrorism;
- Safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention; identifying them and offering support; and
- Enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

6.2 Under Section 26 [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#), **all schools and children's homes** 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. Please see: [Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales](#) / [Revised Prevent duty guidance for Scotland](#)

6.3 Staff have a duty to protect children and young people from the risks of radicalisation and extremism, as they would with any other form of exploitation. Staff must educate children and young people around the risks of radicalisation and extremism and ensure that they create a safe space where they are able to debate issues relating to radicalisation. This is part of educating them about the risks.

6.4 Settings must take a preventative approach to safeguarding children and young people 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 can be accessed at: [EducateAgainstHate](#)

6.5 In order to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential to be 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 wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), wherever these influences come from.

7.0 Channel

7.1 In addition, Sections 36-41 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#), sets out a duty on local authorities and partners to establish and cooperate with a local [Channel Programme](#) (in England and Wales)/[PMAP](#) in Scotland) to provide support for anybody vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

7.2 Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme through which individuals consent to receive support to address their vulnerabilities and reduce the risk to them. It 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 setting 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.

7.3 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](#) in England and Wales/ [PMAP](#) in Scotland.

8.0 Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

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- 8.1** Staff must work with and educate children and young to help develop understanding around the risks of radicalisation and ensure that they create a safe space where they are able to discuss issues relating to radicalisation and extremism.
- 8.2** Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism must be part of the whole-setting approach to safeguarding. The Headteacher or equivalent/ Registered Manager must ensure that the setting and its staff:
- strive to prevent radicalisation on a day-to-day basis;
 - are alert to indications and risks ;
 - have a curriculum that addresses the issues involved in radicalisation;
 - and conduct is consistent with preventing radicalisation.

Any concerns about a member of staff in relation to radicalisation or extremism must be reported to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead and the Regional Director must be informed.

- 8.3** Staff must be aware that radicalisation does not refer to any one religion or faith. Young people can be groomed into holding extremist views politically as well as religiously. Staff have a duty to promote an environment within the setting that is diverse and multicultural, but where views which are outside of mainstream society and single out a particular faith, religion, race or gender not be tolerated. Staff must challenge any form of discriminatory language.
- 8.4** Headteachers or equivalent/Registered Managers, DSLs and Safeguarding Leads and senior leaders 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.

- 8.5** Staff must have an awareness and understanding of radicalisation and that it is similar to other forms of exploitation and involves grooming and coercing young people, sometimes with violence and aggression being used. Staff must be able to protect vulnerable young people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk being radicalised.

9.0 Risk-based approach

There is no single route to radicalisation and 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 is not a linear process and can occur through many different methods and combinations of methods, such as, online, via social media or in settings, such as, within the home, local groups etc.

To safeguard children and young people who are vulnerable to radicalisation, DSLs/ Safeguarding Leads will need to take a risk-based approach and consider an individual's behaviour in the context of wider influencing factors and vulnerabilities.

Further information can be found at [Understanding and identifying radicalisation risk](#)

9.1 Understanding the context

The DSL and Safeguarding Lead should understand the risk of radicalisation in their area and setting. This risk will vary greatly and can change quickly, but nowhere is risk free.

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The DSL and the Safeguarding Lead will engage with local safeguarding partners including the police, local authority and local and regional Prevent Co-ordinator's (where applicable) to develop up-to-date understanding of the local risks and context.

'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).

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.

9.2 Potential indicators of risk

Schools and children's homes have a duty to assess the risk presented to children and young people in their settings around the risks of being drawn into extremism. Staff must be aware of children and young people's vulnerabilities, their family contexts as well as the risks in the local communities. There are often several risk factors present that, when seen together, can cause concern. Staff must have an understanding of how to recognise and support those who are at risk or extremism.

There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism. The process of radicalisation is different for everyone and can take place over an extended period or within a very short timeframe. Some of the known ways that children and young people can be drawn into violence, or can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups include:

- Through the influence of family members or friends
- Direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or extremist literature
- Grooming – where the vulnerabilities of a young person are exploited to form an exclusive friendship which draws the young person away from other influences that might challenge the radical ideology.
- Through the internet and social media, which may normalise radical views and promote content that is shocking and extreme. Children can be trusting and may not necessarily appreciate bias, which can lead to being drawn into such groups and to adopt their extremist views.

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, lack of self-esteem
- Issues at home or family issues
- 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 and/or community tension

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- Lacking empathy, difficulty in understanding the consequences of their actions
- 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

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. 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
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (involvement via online groups, narratives, programmes and networks may be less apparent)
- Secretive behaviour, losing interest in friends and activities
- 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 and/or messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups

The Government provides a list of terrorist groups or organisations banned under UK law, and details of proscription criteria. [Proscribed terror groups or organisations](#)

It is important that staff are aware of children and young people's vulnerabilities, their family contexts and the risks in the local communities and understand how to support at risk of extremism.

Staff must always be alert to **changes** in children and young people's behaviours which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Please also see: [Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting](#) for further information about risk indicators, and [Understanding and identifying radicalisation risk in your education setting](#) for further information on the push and pull factors that can make a learner at risk of extremism or radicalisation.

10.0 Prevent duty self-assessment tool

DFE have produced a Self-assessment tool to help schools in England review their responsibilities under the Prevent duty, which can be found here: [Prevent duty self-assessment tool for schools](#)

The tool helps schools to understand how well embedded their existing policies and practices are, and to encourage a cycle of continuous review and improvement. It contains requirements and recommends good practice activities to meet those requirements.

11.0 Online Safety

Please also see Staying Safe Online, Web Filtering and Monitoring Policy, Gaming Devices Guidance

11.1 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.

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11.2 The setting has an appropriate web filtering system in place and a clear policy on the use of *Mobile and Smart Technology* in school. Children's homes and residential school staff should also be familiar with the *Mobile Device, Smart Technology, and Internet Access Policy* that will apply outside of school hours. Staff must be vigilant when children and young people are using their mobile phones and other devices. Any concerns content must be reported immediately to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead.

11.3 The Headteacher or equivalent/Registered Manager must ensure that there are arrangements in place for the monitoring of children and young people's use of the internet. Any concerns regarding inappropriate or unsafe internet use must be immediately reported to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead and documented onto the electronic recording system.

11.4 All staff must ensure that children and young people in their settings are supported and helped to understand about staying safe online.

London Grid for Learning have produced useful resources on Prevent [Online Safety Resource Centre - London Grid for Learning \(lgfl.net\)](#) that can be utilised.

The [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) provides advice, information and links to toolkits to help keep those in [Residential Care Settings](#) safe online. They also provide information on [Supporting Vulnerable Groups Online](#).

12.0 What to do if you have concerns

If a child or others are in immediate danger, you must phone the Police 999 immediately.

12.1 The DSL/ Safeguarding Lead must ensure that staff understand the issues of radicalisation and extremism, that they are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and extremism and know how to refer their concerns. The DSL/Safeguarding Lead must receive all safeguarding concerns about children and young people in the setting who may be vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation or are showing signs of radicalisation. **The DSL (School)/Safeguarding Lead(Home) is the main point of contact for referring concerns about radicalisation to the appropriate agencies, including Prevent. (Please also see 13.0 Local Procedures below)**

12.2 The DSL/Safeguarding Lead must report any concerns or issues regarding radicalisation to the Chair of Governors for the School – Richard Adams-Murgatroyd. The Group Head of Safeguarding/Safeguarding Adviser must also be informed of any concerns by emailing safeguarding@ofgl.co.uk

12.3 The DSL/Safeguarding Lead 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.

12.4 Staff throughout the setting must understand the issues of radicalisation and extremism be able to recognise the signs of vulnerability, radicalisation and extremism.

12.5 Staff must refer all concerns about children and young people who show signs of vulnerability or radicalisation to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead within **one working day**.

12.6 If there are immediate concerns regarding the safety of a child or young person, staff must report concerns to the DSL/Safeguarding Lead immediately where they will be supported to refer their concerns to the police. All concerns must be documented on the electronic recording system. When there are significant concerns about a child or young person, the DSL/Safeguarding Lead in liaison with the Headteacher or equivalent/Registered Manager will make a referral to the local Prevent Team.

At Integrated education and care settings,**When a concern is reported at the school:**

- it must be recorded on the School's electronic recording system
- The DSL will liaise with the Home Safeguarding Lead and share the relevant information.
- The Home Safeguarding Lead will make a note on the child's file at the Home.

When a concern is reported at the Children's Home:

- it must be recorded on the Home's electronic recording system.
- The Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the School DSL.
- The DSL will make a note on the child's file at the school.

12.7 The Serious Incident Notification Policy outlines the expectations of the internal process for notifying serious incidents to senior leaders and the Executive Team. There are different versions of the policy for Education and for Children's Homes (Children's Care), both can be found on Engage. Staff must be familiar with these policies and ensure they followed.

13.0 Local Procedures

The DSL (and any deputies)/Safeguarding Lead must be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral. The local procedures for Leicestershire and Rutland's Prevent Strategy are as follows ([Prevent | Leicestershire Police \(leics.police.uk\)](#)).

- You're best placed to spot when something's not right with someone close. So trust your instincts and tell us your concerns in confidence.
 - The earlier you tell us your worries, the quicker we can get the person you care about the help they need to protect them from being groomed and radicalised. We're here to help. You won't be wasting our time.
 - Often there's no need for ongoing police involvement and the right support could be provided by teachers, health or social workers, or specialist mentors.
 - To find out more about how to help someone close to you visit [actearly.uk](#) which is a helpful resource with advice, practical tips on how to start a conversation with someone you're worried about, online safety advice and real stories.
- If you have concerns about any of your friends, neighbours, or relatives, you can tell us about them by clicking 'Make a referral' below to complete our quick and simple online form.
- You can also contact the Prevent Team on [101](#) extension 6770.
- You can also call the national police Prevent advice line [0800 011 3764](#), in confidence, to share your concerns with our specially trained officers.
- If it's an emergency, please call [999](#).
- If you see online material promoting terrorism or extremism, you can [report it online](#).
- You can speak to your [local policing team](#) or your [local council community team](#) about helping run local events about Prevent.

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- We'll attend your event to make sure our communities understand the work we're doing and have a say in the way we do it.
- We'll tell you more about the signs and behavioural changes to look out for in someone who might be becoming involved in terrorism or extremism and explain who might be at risk.
- What support is available
- Anyone who is referred to Prevent is assessed by the local authority and other partners, including the police, to see if they're suitable for [Channel](#), Prevent's specialist support scheme.
 - Channel is a voluntary, confidential, early intervention programme that supports people who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
 - To help determine if someone is suitable for support through Channel, a Channel panel is chaired by the local authority, who meet with police, health professionals and other partners to discuss the person you are worried about, and decide on what tailored package of support can be offered to them.
- If Channel support isn't deemed appropriate – for example, if the person is at risk of harm but they aren't being radicalised – they may be signposted to other safeguarding services for help.
 - Channel support includes things like theological or ideological mentoring, help with mental health, drug or alcohol abuse issues, as well as education and career advice. Taking part in Channel doesn't go on someone's criminal record and won't negatively impact their future education or career prospects. It means getting the right kind of help for the person who needs support to move away from extremism.
- Follow the work of our Prevent Team on Twitter: [@EastMidsPrevent](#)
- Make a referral here - [Refer someone to the Prevent Team | Leicestershire Police \(leics.police.uk\)](#)

14.0 Further help and resources

More resources and practical advice can be found at:

- [ETF Learners](#) from the Education and Learning Foundation
- [Let's Talk About It](#)
- [ACT - Action Counters Terrorism](#)
- The Active Change Foundation (ACF) provides a confidential helpline to prevent British nationals from travelling to conflict zones. ACF Confidential helpline telephone number is **020 8539 2770**
- The Anti-Terrorist Hotline is **0800 789 321**
- Crime Stoppers can be called anonymously on **0800 555111**

We are part of the Outcomes First Group Family, by working together we will build incredible futures by empowering vulnerable children, young people and adults in the UK to be happy and make their way in the world

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