

Practice guide



Tackling extremism
and radicalisation

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As well as protecting children from physical and sexual harm, neglect and emotional abuse safeguarding also covers protecting children from other forms of harm including drugs, gangs, and sexual exploitation, as well as online safety. Children also need protecting from radicalisation and being exposed to extremist views.

All those working with children and young people need to be able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do should children be identified as susceptible to this or where it is suspected that they are holding extreme views.

The UK government's Contest is their counter terrorism strategy, which as well as looking at how to respond to terrorist threats, recognises the importance of working with those who may hold extremist views in order to challenge these and channel them away from such views. This aspect of the strategy is known as Prevent. Various government bodies including the police, local authorities, the health service and child care providers have

a duty in law to address this through the following means:

- to undertake risk assessments,
- to work in partnership,
- to train staff and
- to have IT policies

Risk assessments

In order to carry out a risk assessment, it is expected that organisations will have a general understanding of what children could be exposed to including online radicalisation. There is recognition that there is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology.

Factors that may have a bearing on someone becoming more vulnerable may include: peer pressure, influence from others including via the internet, their involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour, race / hate crime, lack of self-esteem, or someone with personal or political grievances.

General safeguarding principles apply to keeping children safe from the risk of radicalisation as set out in statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Where there is concern that a child may be at risk of radicalisation then a referral should be made to the Channel programme. This programme focusses on providing support and encourages individuals to engage, though the programme is voluntary.

Churches and places of worship can help children and young people builds up resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment for debating issues and assisting them to understand how they can influence and participate in decision making, within a context of understanding citizenship, and core British values and democracy and freedom of speech.

Working in Partnership

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) are responsible for coordinating what is done by local agencies, in all aspects of Prevent work.

Training

The Home Office has produced a core training package on Prevent titled 'Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP)', and this is available through the LSCB and partner agencies.

There is also an e-learning training package available from:
www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk

IT Policies

There is recognition that children can be radicalised online, so it is important that all organisations working with children and young people work with them to ensure that they stay safe online. The UK Safer Internet Centre can provide advice in this area.

The Channel Programme

The Channel programme was first piloted in 2007 and rolled out across England and Wales in 2012. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support to anyone who is identified as being vulnerable to being

drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by:

- Identifying individuals at risk
- Assessing the nature and extent of that risk, and
- Developing an individualised support plan for that person.

Channel uses a vulnerability assessment framework using three criteria which are: engagement with a group, cause or ideology, intent to cause harm, and capability to cause harm. The three criteria are assessed by considering 22 factors that can contribute to vulnerability (13 associated with engagement, six related to intent, and three for capability).

Some factors could include:

Engagement

Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists

Changing their style of dress, or appearance to accord with the group

Loss of interest in other friends or activity not associated with extreme ideology, group or cause

Intention

Using insulting or derogatory names of labels for another group

Expressing attitudes that justify offending on behalf of the group, cause or ideology

Condoning or supporting violence or harm towards others

Capable

Having a history of violence

Having occupational skills or technical expertise that can enable acts of terrorism such as civil engineering, or pharmacology, or IT skills.

Channel will work with the individual usually with a focused or one to one mentoring programme looking at mentoring support and role model, life skills, anger management sessions, constructive pursuits and leisure activities, family support contact, and any other specific area such as drugs and alcohol awareness, tailoring support to the individual.

Where an individual has a need for theological or ideological support then the Home Office can commission approved intervention providers to mentor an individual.

The Channel e-learning course can be accessed from:

http://course.ncalt.com/Channel_General_Awareness/01/index.html
or through contacting your local LSCB.

What can churches do?

Churches should be alert to anyone who discloses that they have been exposed to extremist actions,

views or material including online. Where concerned that someone may be vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation then advice should be sought from the LSCB where there is concern about a child or young person or where concerned about an adult then from the police Prevent Team.

The Vulnerability Assessment Framework

The 22 factors are as follows:

Engagement with a group, cause or ideology

- Feelings of grievance or 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

Intent to cause harm

- Over-identification with a group or ideology
- 'Them and Us' thinking
- Dehumanisation of the enemy
- Attitudes that justify offending
- Harmful means to an end
- Harmful objectives

Capability to cause harm

- Individual knowledge, skills and competencies
- Access to networks, funding or equipment
- Criminal capability

The UK Government's strategy for countering terrorism is known as CONTEST. This is organised around four work streams, each comprising a number of key objectives which are:

1. Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks.
2. Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

3. Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack.
4. Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

Following a review of the strategy 'Prevent' was widened to address all forms of radicalisation.

The Prevent duty

The Prevent Duty is the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Securities Act 2015 on specific authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Such authorities include local authorities, the police, NHS Trusts, schools and child care providers, including early years and later years, providers.

The British government along with the National Counter Terrorism Security Office on behalf of the Police, has also issued guidance to those with security responsibility in churches and other places of worship on how to keep safe:

Counter Terrorism Protective Security Advice for Places of Worship

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/375136/Places_of_Worship_Reviewed.pdf

Useful contacts

UK Safer Internet Centre

www.saferinternet.org.uk

This is one of a series of **Practice Guides** published by CCPAS. For our full range of resources and for more information visit our website **www.ccpas.co.uk**



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