



PSA Statutory Guidance: Prevent Duty

Date reviewed: Autumn 2025
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STATUTORY GUIDANCE: PREVENT DUTY MARCH 2024

A. Preventing radicalisation in KCSIE 2024

Note: The preventing radicalisation section remains under review, following the publication of a new definition of extremism on the 6th March 2024.

Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a school's safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Terrorism 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 must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

- Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern.
- It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism.
- As with 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.
- Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral.
- The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' wider safeguarding obligations.

- The school's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in education settings should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education (and also covers childcare).

Channel

- Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism.
- Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multiagency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required.

- A representative from the school may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment.
- An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.

PSA values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Students have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, an individual's rights, community safety and community cohesion.

- **Staff responsibilities in relation to the Prevent duty:** All staff should look out for concerning changes in behaviour and report them to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). Any concerning changes in behaviour may indicate a safeguarding concern. These changes can be emotional, verbal or physical. A learner may be vulnerable in certain ways that could make them more susceptible to a range of harms. These could include sexual exploitation, extremism and radicalisation, or serious violence.

How to raise concerns: Steps to take:

If staff have any concerns about a learner's welfare, they should speak to the DSL immediately. Report your concerns: [Buckinghamshire Safeguarding - Report a concern](#)

For PSA the local contact details are as follows:

local authority Prevent lead – Alison Watts; 01296 674784; alison.watts1@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

local policing team: Claire Annison claire.annison@thamesvalley.police.uk

These contact partners will help staff understand the local risk and threats in our area.

Report extremism

If you need to report extremism concerns you should:

- contact your local authority designated officer (LADO) through your local safeguarding partnership or local authority
- submit the details at [report extremism in education](#)

Additional support

[The Department has published further advice for those working in education settings with safeguarding responsibilities on the Prevent duty.](#)

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- [Prevent awareness e-learning](#) offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- [Prevent referrals e-learning](#) supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.
- [Channel awareness e-learning](#) is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.
- [Educate Against Hate](#) is a government website designed to support school teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides

free information and resources to help staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

B. Summary of Prevent Duty Guidance March 2024 (EDUCATION SECTION)

- Children and young people continue to make up a significant proportion of Channel cases, and in recent years there have been concerns regarding increased numbers of learners being arrested for terrorism-related offences.
- Educators are often in a unique position, through interacting with learners on a regular basis, to be able to identify concerning behaviour changes that may indicate they are susceptible to radicalisation.
- Settings should not only be alert to violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, including certain divisive or intolerant narratives which can reasonably be linked to terrorism.
- For schools, this guidance should be read alongside relevant safeguarding guidance. In England, this includes [‘Working together to safeguard children’](#) and [‘Keeping children safe in education’](#).
- The Department for Education has also published supporting advice for schools and further education settings on [managing the risk of radicalisation](#) in their education setting.
- Compliance with the Prevent duty will reflect existing good practice on safeguarding. For example, it will ensure susceptibility to radicalisation is incorporated into safeguarding training, policies and risk assessments. It is not anticipated that compliance will result in additional burdens on settings.

Leadership and partnership

- All education providers should have a designated lead in a senior management role who is responsible for the delivery of Prevent. They should ensure that there are appropriate capabilities (to understand and manage risk) and that the role and importance of Prevent is made clear to relevant staff.
- Where a Prevent referral is adopted, education providers must co-operate as reasonably practicable with local authority-led Channel panels. Multi-agency involvement in Channel is essential to ensure the full range of information is accessible to the panel, so that susceptibility, vulnerabilities, risk and support needs can be fully assessed.
- Effective partnership can also be demonstrated by engaging appropriately where required with other partners, such as the police and Prevent leads in local authorities. This allows for an up-to-date awareness of risk and threat posed, and latest developments in best practice.

Capabilities

Understanding risk: Training and induction

- Education settings should make sure that relevant staff have training that could help them prevent learners from being radicalised into terrorism. This training should be delivered at the earliest opportunity to ensure staff are adequately equipped for their role.
- We expect appropriate members of staff to understand the factors that lead people to support terrorist ideologies or engage in terrorist-related activity. Such staff should have sufficient training to be able to recognise susceptibility to terrorism and be aware of what action to take in response, including the setting’s internal Prevent referral arrangements.
- Planning for staff training should include considering what level of knowledge is proportionate for different roles.

- The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) or Prevent lead in the setting should receive more in-depth training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies, how to make referrals and how to work with Channel panels. It is recommended that this training is updated at least every two years, enabling the lead to support other staff on Prevent matters and update them on relevant issues.
- Further advice on training may be provided by your local authority safeguarding team and government quality assured resources are available on [Educate Against Hate. Guidance on using appropriate external agencies for schools in England](#), particularly with regard to political impartiality requirements, is available on GOV.UK.

Managing risk:

Risk assessment

- Education settings should have robust safeguarding policies in place to ensure that those at risk of radicalisation are identified and appropriate support is provided.
- Settings should consider the process for how learners or staff raise concerns regarding radicalisation internally and the approach for submitting a Prevent referral, including use of the Prevent [national referral form](#).
- Policies should be proportionate and based on an understanding, shared with partners, of the threat and risk in the local area, the phase of education, and the size and type of setting.
- Settings should include the process for how learners or staff should raise concerns regarding radicalisation internally, and how these are then assessed.
- As part of their existing approach to safeguarding, settings should already have robust procedures for sharing information, both internally and externally. Information sharing is vital in promoting the welfare of learners and staff. Failure to share relevant information can affect the safety, welfare and educational outcomes of learners. As part of this, the setting should have a clear policy on their approach for submitting a Prevent referral, including use of the Prevent [national referral form](#).
- When seeking to share personal data regarding people susceptible to radicalisation, practitioners should consider whether it is appropriate to rely on the person's consent and must comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. Where it is not possible to rely on consent, it is still possible to share information if there is a [lawful basis](#) for doing so.
- In schools it is important to refer to requirements set out in '[Keeping children safe in education](#)' in England. This includes ensuring that when a child leaves a school relevant information about engagement with Channel and the outcome of this should be securely transferred within the appropriate child protection file. This enables the new setting to have support in place in advance of a child joining.

Reducing permissive environments

- Taking action to limit the potential harm and influence of radicalisers, as well as extremist narratives and content which can reasonably be linked to terrorism, can help reduce the risk of people from becoming terrorists or from supporting terrorism.
- Settings should have measures in place to prevent their facilities being exploited by radicalisers. This includes seeking to ensure that any event spaces or IT equipment are not being used to facilitate the spread of extremist narratives which encourage people into participating in or supporting terrorism.
- This does not mean that the Prevent duty should limit discussion of these issues. Instead, education settings should be spaces in which people can understand and discuss sensitive

topics, including, where appropriate, terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas.

- When doing so, settings should encourage learners to respect other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Building resilience through the curriculum

- Schools support learners to have the knowledge, skills and values that will prepare them to be citizens in modern Britain. As part of this, in England, they are required to actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- In addition to preparing learners for life in modern Britain, by promoting these shared values, settings can help build resilience to radicalisation and extremism. For example, they can provide a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping learners to understand how they can influence and participate in decision making.
- For schools, there are opportunities in the curriculum to explore relevant topics, such as in Citizenship and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). This includes learning around building positive relationships and the importance of respecting difference, and, for example, taking part in the United Nations Rights Respecting Schools Programme.
- When considering how to build learners resilience to radicalisation, schools should take a proportionate approach, accounting for the age of the learners and type of education being offered.
- Schools in England must also be mindful of their existing duties on political impartiality and to ensure the balanced presentation of political issues. [Guidance on political impartiality is available on GOV.UK](#)

IT policies

- Settings will likely already have policies relating to the appropriate use of their IT equipment and networks, which should contain specific reference to the Prevent duty. Many settings already use filtering as a means of restricting access to harmful content and should consider the use of filters as part of their overall strategy to prevent people from becoming involved in, or supporting, terrorism.
- For schools in England, [‘Keeping children safe in education’](#) and [‘Meeting digital and technology standards’](#) provides advice on appropriate filtering and monitoring systems. The [UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance](#) on what appropriate filtering and monitoring might look like.

External speakers and events

- Settings should consider the extent to which any external speakers and events held on their premises pose a risk of radicalising learners into terrorism.
- Encouragement of terrorism, including glorifying the commission or preparation of acts of terrorism, fundraising for the purposes of terrorism, and inviting support for a proscribed terrorist organisation, are all criminal offences. Settings should not provide a platform for these offences to be committed.
- When deciding whether to host a particular speaker, settings should consider carefully whether the views being expressed, or likely to be expressed, constitute views that are used to encourage people into participating in or supporting terrorism, or are shared by terrorist groups.

- As part of managing the risk of radicalisation, schools' safeguarding policies should set out clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by children themselves, are suitable and appropriately supervised - see PSA Visitors Policy.

Monitoring and assurance

Ofsted inspectors will evaluate the extent to which the setting has a culture of safeguarding that supports effective arrangements to identify learners who may need early help or who are at risk of harm or exploitation, including radicalisation. Trustees must ensure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

C. Statutory Guidance: The Prevent duty March 2024 (INTRODUCTION SUMMARY)

The overall aim of our counter-terrorism strategy, [CONTEST](#) is to reduce the risk from terrorism to the UK, its citizens and interests overseas, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence. Prevent remains one of the key pillars of CONTEST alongside the other three 'P' work strands:

- 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.

The Prevent duty requires specified authorities such as education, to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The duty helps to ensure that people who are susceptible to radicalisation are supported as they would be under safeguarding processes.

Prevent's objectives are to:

- tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
- intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation
- enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

Prevent delivery model

- To tackle the ideological causes of terrorism, Prevent focuses on reducing the influence of radicalisers on susceptible audiences, as well as reducing the availability of, and access to, terrorist content.
- Prevent takes a partnership approach to disrupting radicalisers, including those who sow division and hatred, by working with local, regional and national partners, law enforcement agencies, and other government partners.
- Prevent intervenes early by identifying people who are susceptible to radicalisation and providing support to those suitable for intervention.
- Where the police assess a radicalisation risk following a Prevent referral, a Channel panel will meet to discuss the referral, assess the risk and decide whether the person should be accepted into Channel. Once accepted, the panel agree a tailored package of support to be offered to the person. The panel is chaired by the local authority and attended by multi-agency partners such as police, education professionals, health services, housing and social services.
- Channel is a voluntary process, and people must give their consent before they receive support. In cases where the person is under 18 years of age, consent is provided by a parent, guardian or the agency that has responsibility for their care.

- Rehabilitation seeks to reduce the risk of people who have been involved in terrorist-related activity, including those who have been convicted of offences.

Threat and risk

Prevent's first objective is to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism. The ideological component of terrorism is what sets it apart from other acts of serious violence. Islamist ideology is resilient and enduring. Extreme Right-Wing ideology is resurgent. Other ideologies are less present, but still have the potential to motivate, inspire and be used to justify terrorism.

- The primary domestic terrorist threat comes from Islamist terrorism. Islamist terrorism is the threat or use of violence as a means to establish a strict interpretation of an Islamic society. For some this is a political ideology which envisions, for example, the creation of a global Islamic caliphate based on strict implementation of shari'ah law, drawing on political and religious ideas developed in the 20th century by Sayyid Qutb and Abdallah Azzam. Many adherents believe that violence (or 'jihad' as they conceive it) is not only a necessary strategic tool to achieve their aims, but an individual's religious duty.
- Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism describes those involved in Extreme Right-Wing activity who use terrorist violence to further their ideology. These ideologies can be broadly characterised as Cultural Nationalism, White Nationalism and White Supremacism. Individuals and groups may subscribe to ideological trends and ideas from more than one category. Unlike Islamist terrorist groups, Extreme Right-Wing terrorists are not typically organised into formal groups with leadership hierarchies and territorial ambitions, but informal online communities which facilitate international links.
- Prevent also tackles other ideologies and concerns that may pose a terrorist threat. Established terrorist narratives exhibit common themes such as antisemitism, misogyny, anti-establishment, anti-LGBT grievances and religious or ethnic superiority.
- Left-Wing, Anarchist and Single-Issue Terrorism currently represents a significantly smaller terrorist threat to the UK than Islamist terrorism or Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism and is not currently present in the UK at any significant scale.
- Conspiracy theories can act as gateways to radicalised thinking and sometimes violence. In some cases, a blurring of ideologies with personal narratives makes it harder to assess the risk that people may pose. The need to understand motivation and intent is why in some cases it can take time for an incident to be declared terrorism or not, and why sometimes it remains unclear.

Prevent work should always be aware of the risk presented by the people or group in question and recognise the agency of people in aligning with extremist groups. Encouraging susceptible people to commit acts of terrorism on their own initiative is a deliberate strategy of terrorist groups in their propaganda and is exacerbated by communities who glorify acts of violence against society or specific groups within it.

There is rapid proliferation of terrorist content on multiple online services. Research has demonstrated that the internet has become the 'preferred' avenue for those searching for terrorist propaganda or contacts. The internet continues to make it simpler for individuals and groups to promote and to consume radicalising content. This can involve people, including a concerning number of children under the age of 18, committing offences by downloading and disseminating terrorist materials.

Responding to the threat

Security Threat Checks

Where frontline professionals have identified a concern that they consider requires a referral into Prevent, it is important that they can indicate why this risk is relevant to Prevent. As Prevent is a counter-terrorism capability, the presence, or possible presence, of any terrorist or terrorism-linked ideology will be an important consideration.

Susceptibility to radicalisation

- Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence. Most people who commit terrorism offences do so of their own agency and dedication to an ideological cause.
- There is no single profile of a radicalised person, nor is there a single pathway or 'conveyor belt' to being radicalised. There are many factors which can, either alone or combined, lead someone to subscribe to terrorist or terrorism-supporting ideology. These factors often include exposure to radicalising influences, real and perceived grievances – often created or exacerbated through grievance narratives espoused by extremists – and a person's own susceptibility.
- A person's susceptibility to radicalisation may be linked to their vulnerability. [A person can be vulnerable](#) if they need special care, support or protection because of age, disability, risk of abuse or neglect. A person's vulnerabilities may be relevant to their susceptibility to radicalisation and to the early intervention approach that is required to divert them away from radicalisation.
- Vulnerabilities may not be present or relevant to the early intervention approach required. Not all people susceptible to radicalisation will be vulnerable, and there are other circumstances, needs or other underlying factors that may make a person susceptible to radicalisation but do not constitute a vulnerability.

Early intervention: referral to Prevent

Referral

- Prevent referrals are likely to be made in the first instance by people who come into contact with those who appear to be at risk of being radicalised. Frontline professionals, when deciding whether to make a referral, should consider whether they believe the person they are concerned about may be on a pathway that could lead to terrorism.
- Signs that extremist views are being adopted, including changes in behaviour that might signal a concern, can be used to consider whether a referral should be made to seek support under Prevent.
- In determining whether a concern meets the threshold for referral to Prevent, it is important to consider the harm posed to the person, as well as whether accessing support through Prevent might stop potential wider societal harm committed by the person.
- The process will vary, but when a concern is identified, the [notice, check, share procedure](#) should be applied as outlined in the Prevent duty GOV.UK awareness course. Specified authorities should use the Prevent [national referral form](#).
- Often, the concern will be escalated to the organisation or institution's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Prevent lead to check. If there is a concern about potential radicalisation or a reason to believe that someone is at risk of becoming involved in terrorism or supporting it, a referral should be made to police, who will assess whether the person is suitable to be considered by a Channel panel for support.
- Anyone making a referral should ensure there is concern that someone may be susceptible to becoming involved in terrorism or supporting it. There may be times when the precise ideological driver is not clear. Yet, like any safeguarding mechanism, it is far better to receive

referrals which turn out not to be of concern than for someone who genuinely needs support to be missed.

- If you are unsure whether a concern constitutes a Prevent referral, we encourage seeking advice from your DSL (or equivalent), local authority Prevent lead or police, in the first instance.

Gateway assessment

- Once a referral is submitted to Prevent, it is assessed by specialist police officers and staff. These officers determine whether there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a person is susceptible to becoming a terrorist or supporting terrorism and should therefore be considered by the Channel panel for support through Prevent. This is called a 'gateway assessment'.

Channel

- Channel is a multi-agency programme across England and Wales that provides support to people susceptible to becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, underpinned by Section 36 of the CTSA 2015.
- The person (or their parent or legal guardian, if under 18) referred to it must give consent before any support can be provided under Channel. [Further information on Channel is available on GOV.UK.](#)
- Channel panels are chaired by the local authority, and attended by multi-agency partners such as police, education professionals, health services, housing and social services. They will meet to discuss the referral, assess the risk, and, if appropriate, agree a tailored package of support to be offered to the person.
- Where Channel is not considered suitable, alternative options will be explored where appropriate. The person may be offered alternative support, such as by mental health services or children's social care services.