

LSCB GUIDANCE ABOUT SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN UNDER THE PREVENT DUTY

1. Introduction

This guidance covers safeguarding responsibilities under the statutory Prevent duty in respect of children under the age of 18 years. The Government's Prevent Strategy (2011) refers to Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and the revised Prevent Duty guidance (2015) sets out that all governing bodies and proprietors of all schools and registered childcare providers should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Channel is a key element of the national Prevent strategy (2011). It is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners (such as the education and health sectors, social services, children's and youth services and offender management services), the police and the local community to:

- identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism;
- assess the nature and extent of that risk; and
- develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Channel is about safeguarding children and adults from being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity. It is about early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before illegality occurs

2. Definition

The grooming of children for the purposes of involvement in violent extremist activity is child abuse and the Child protection procedures issued by the London Safeguarding Children Board should be followed when there are concerns that a child or young person is at risk, or is being, exploited under the definition of these procedures.

The Prevent strategy definition of **extremism** is:

“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. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.”

The Prevent Strategy defines **radicalisation** as follows:

“Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.”

The London child protection procedures sets out that children and young people can be radicalised in different ways:

- They can be groomed either online or in person by people seeking to draw them into extremist activity. Older children or young people might be radicalised over the internet or through the influence of their peer network – in this instance their parents might not know about this or feel powerless to stop their child's radicalisation;
- They can be groomed by family members who hold harmful, extreme beliefs, including parents/carers and siblings who live with the child and/or person(s) who live outside the family home but have an influence over the child's life;
- They can be exposed to violent, anti-social, extremist imagery, rhetoric and writings which can lead to the development of a distorted world view in which extremist ideology seems reasonable. In this way they are not being individually targeted but are the victims of propaganda which seeks to radicalise.

3. Legal and policy context

All Local Authorities in England and Wales are listed as Specified Authority as per section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Act) and as such are required to share information to reduce opportunities for people being groomed and exploited by extremists. Section 36 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 issues direction to local authorities and police to form a local panel, share information to reduce and manage risk in terms of extremism and potential terrorism.

All local authority areas have Community and Safety Partnership Boards, with information sharing agreements in place between all partners under Section 115 (1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which allows for relevant authorities to share information for the purpose of prevention an detection of crime, to apprehend or prosecute offenders or if it is required by law. In s 115(2) the bodies subject to this agreement (the Police and Local Authority) are deemed relevant authorities.

In response to the challenge of children being radicalised, the previous Government launched a counterterrorism strategy, known as CONTEST. The aim of this strategy is to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from international terrorism to that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence. It has four key strands of work that have a different role to play in tackling the threat from extremism:

- **Pursue** – to stop terrorist attacks;
- **Prepare** – where an attack cannot be stopped, to mitigate its impact
- **Protect** – to strengthen the overall protection against terrorist attacks;

- **Prevent** – to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 specifies that Local Safeguarding Children Boards, local authorities and their partners should be commissioning and providing services for children who are likely to suffer, or may have suffered significant harm, due to radicalisation and extremism (Chapter 1, Section 17).

In March 2015, Parliament approved guidance issued under section 29 of The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act about how specified authorities are to comply with the Prevent duty which came into effect in July 2015. The specified authorities are those judged to have a role in protecting vulnerable children, young people and adults and/or the national security. Sutton is not assessed by the Home Office to be a Prevent Priority Authority and, also not neighbouring local authorities.

The Act comprises three main objectives, to:

- disrupt the ability of people to travel abroad to engage in terrorist activity and then return to the UK
- enhance the ability of operational agencies to monitor and control the actions of those who pose a threat
- combat the underlying ideology that feeds, supports and sanctions terrorism.

From 1 July 2015 all schools and child care providers must have regard to the statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. There is also higher and further education prevent duty guidance.

Sections 36 to 41 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) set out the duty on local authorities and partners of local panels to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into any form of terrorism. The role of the multi-agency Channel Panel is to develop appropriate support package to safeguard those at risk of being drawn into extremism based on assessment of their vulnerability. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities, the police, statutory LSCB partners and the local community to:

- Identify individuals at risk of being drawn in to extremism;
- Assess the nature and extent of that risk;
- Develop the most appropriate support for the individuals concerned.

4. The National Prevent Strategy

The national Prevent strategy has three key objectives which are focused on:

- Ideology – challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it;
- Individuals – protect vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- Institutions – supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.

The first objective is challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it. This includes:

- Being proactive in promoting values such as: democracy, the rule of law, equality of opportunity, freedom of speech, and the universal right to freedom from persecution;
- Focusing on the few people who are most susceptible to terrorist propaganda. It should not be assumed people of any one particular faith are any more vulnerable to radicalisation than other faith or ethnic groups;
- Involving credible voices, local communities and organisations in challenging extremist narratives and ideologies that seek to divide communities.

The second objective is concerned with protecting vulnerable individuals, which relates to children under the London Safeguarding Children Board procedures as follows:

'The direct or indirect grooming of children for involvement in any extremist activity causes harm, and professionals and volunteers working with children and families should be alert to the warning signs and intervene early to challenge and disrupt this process.'

The third objective is supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation and the following areas are highlighted as priorities:

- A wide range of sectors can provide routes through which people are radicalised to become terrorists or support terrorism. Priority areas for intervention include: education, faith, health, criminal justice, charities and the internet (which is identified as a key risk which cuts across all sectors);
- Prevent work in schools and colleges is key, but needs to be proportionate. Priorities are: to ensure that all school staff know what to do if they see signs of radicalisation; reducing risks of exposure to extremist views in out of school hours provision; and collaboration between agencies to identify children at risk of radicalisation and protect them from harm;
- People with mental health issues or learning disabilities may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and it is important that all staff working in health and social care are aware of possible signs of radicalisation and how to refer people for further support; and;
- Work with young offenders and people vulnerable to offending has a particularly critical role in ensuring the future success of Prevent.

5. Vulnerability factors

A common feature of radicalisation is that the child or young person does not recognise the exploitative nature of what is happening and does not see themselves as a victim of grooming or exploitation. The harm children and young people can experience ranges from a child adopting or complying with extreme views which limits their social interaction and full engagement with their education, to young children being taken to war zones and older children being groomed for involvement in violence.

Here are some of the factors that might contribute towards an individual becoming radicalised. This is not an exhaustive list and the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that he/she will be involved in extremist activity. However, a combination of many of these factors may increase the vulnerability to extremist activity.

- 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
- 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

A further explanation of the above factors can be found in the vulnerability assessment framework (2012) issued by the Government.

6. Local support and contacts

As with other safeguarding issues, where a worker has any concerns that a person or their family may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should refer to the London Child Protection procedure and speak with the individual agency safeguarding lead and/or consult with the Prevent practice lead to refer a case to the MASH team.

If the concerns about an individual are not serious enough to be escalated or where there is no evidence that the individual is vulnerable to radicalisation the safeguarding lead / Prevent practice lead may decide that they can be addressed by action within the organisation and require an Early Help assessment, see page 8.

Referrals to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be made where there are concerns that a child is at risk of harm and/or their health and development is likely to, or is being, impaired.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel: 0208 649 0417 (Out of hours: 020 8770 5000)

Email: mash@sutton.gov.uk

Secure email: mash@sutton.gov.uk.cjsm.net

Advice regarding the assessment of risk in relation to extremism and support to identify appropriate interventions is provided by the Children's Social Care Prevent Practice lead and the LBS Prevent manager.

Janice Barnett, Prevent Practice Lead, LBS Children's social care

Tel: 020 8770 4464 (Direct line)

Janis.barnet@sutton.gov.uk

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Paula Wilkinson, Prevent Manager for Adults and Community Safety

Tel 020 8649 0448 or 020 8770 5000

prevent@sutton.gov.uk

7. References

DfE (2015) Prevent duty guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

DfE (2015) *The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

HM Government (2011) *Prevent Strategy*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy-2011>

HM Government (2011) Counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/contest>

HM Government (2012) *Channel: Vulnerability Assessment Framework*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118187/vul-assessment.pdf

HM Government (2015) *Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales on the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf

HM Government (2015) *Channel Duty Guidance*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

HM Government (2015) *Working Together to Safeguard Children*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2>

London Safeguarding Children Board (2016) *Safeguarding children exposed to extremist ideology* http://www.londoncp.co.uk/chapters/B_contents.html

LBS Sutton Local Prevent Road Map (downloads)
https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200514/community_safety_and_policing/1259/statutory_prevent_duty

The National Police Counter Terrorism Network launched the **Prevent Tragedies** website which draws together information and advice
<http://www.preventtragedies.co.uk/>