

# Combatting Terrorism Guidance



## Combatting Terrorism Act 2015

This Act requires all partner agencies including all schools, primary, secondary, private, maintained, academy, tertiary, and higher education establishments, including universities, to include the Prevent agenda in their Safeguarding work with students. Inspections are now including this in their judgement regarding safeguarding. It further requires all other child care providers to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” during the course of their work with the child / children. This is known as the Prevent Duty. This means that all bodies must consider what they can do to protect children and adults at risk from the risk of radicalisation.

## What is PREVENT?

Prevent is part of the Government’s Counter Terrorism Strategy aimed at preventing people becoming involved in, or supporting, terrorism. It provides a counter narrative and offers support to individuals and institutions. All age groups, even nursery aged children, and youth agencies have been targeted by extremist groups. In order to fulfil this duty it is essential that adults are able to identify children and adults at risk who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and who know what to do if any are identified.

## What is Radicalisation?

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. During that process it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being drawn into terrorist related activity. Protecting children from radicalisation is similar in nature to protecting children and adults at risk from other dangers, e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation, etc. whether these dangers come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

## What is Terrorism?

Terrorism is the unlawful use of violence or threat of violence to support a belief or ideology. In order to be successful a terrorist organisation needs a leader, finances, a business brain, scientists, IT specialists, Public Relations specialists etc.

International terrorism includes organisations such as ISIS. Domestic terrorism includes Animal Rights campaigners, IRA, etc. Examples include Lee Rigby, the Café in Australia, Charlie Hebde in Paris, Pro- and Anti-hunting extremists, etc.

It is possible to build up a person’s resilience to radicalisation and involvement in terrorism by enabling him / her to challenge extremist views and ideas. It is important to stress that there is nothing glamorous or noble in the use of violence to express any viewpoint.

## What is Extremism?

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental values including democracy, the law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It is the use of extreme behaviour to support a belief or ideology. Not all extremism is harmful or criminal but sometimes those who behave in an extreme way can go on to become terrorists. Prevention is always better than cure.

## Aim of the Prevent Strategy

To help and prevent people being drawn into terrorism or extremist violence by supporting those who are vulnerable to becoming extremist; by working with sectors and institutions; and by challenging extremist ideologies. Prevent attempts to ensure that the individual is protected and thus the communities are safer.

## Recruitment

Child sexual exploitation is sometimes part of the grooming of the girls. The recruiters target the vulnerable, grooming him / her and giving him / her gifts etc.

S/he is encouraged to form a group, may be involved in sexual exploitation and then required to commit a terrorist act. The young people may be contacted in person, may be exposed to inflammatory speeches in public places, or may be contacted on - line or via publications, specific groups or other forms of propaganda. Interestingly a higher proportion of people on the autistic spectrum are vulnerable to these approaches, possibly due to their propensity to obsess.

### **Extremist material Online**

The internet is often used to promote terrorism and extremism. For example, the “Call of Duty” on - line game has been used fairly extensively as a form of recruitment for young people. This is a game which can be accessed online. The recruitment begins as an innocent private game, then it is suggested that the vulnerable individual should come and do these activities for real! The Social media is accessible to all. The propaganda is focussed on youth, and war, death and destruction are glamorised.

### **Risk Assessment**

The general risks affecting children and adults at risk vary from area to area and will be different according to age, vulnerability, idealism, etc. There is no single way to identify an individual who may be susceptible to terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, adults should be alert to changes in behaviour, appearance, speech and language etc. which could indicate that s/he may be in need of help or protection.

The Channel programme is an area of work which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The individual’s engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Each Local Safeguarding Children Board has been required to set up a Channel Panel for referrals. Any adult expressing concerns about a child or adult at risk, or who feels s/he could need help from this programme, must refer to this panel

### **The Four Ps**

The Governments Counter Terrorism Strategy is divided into four areas:

- **Protect** – The Government aims to make it more difficult to attack by strengthening the borders.
- **Prepare** – If an attack is mounted, the aim is to mitigate the impact of an attack and quickly get back to normal
- **Pursue** – Stop attacks using information which is often obtained by the Government agencies via intelligence or surveillance.
- **Prevent** – The actual attacks, or planning attacks, is illegal. The aim of the prevent agenda is to be in place before any illegal act has taken place. The aim is to stop involvement and support individuals.

Further information can be obtained from [www.direct.gov.uk/reportingonlineterrorism](http://www.direct.gov.uk/reportingonlineterrorism)

**N.B. It is important to note that the instances of attempts to radicalise people have increased in 2020 during the coronavirus pandemic and the changes brought about by the measures taken to combat the disease.**

If there are concerns that individuals may be contacted, abused or harassed on-line by agencies which could be deemed to be extremist, radical or terrorist in nature, then those with concern must ensure that the individuals are using good practice when on line. This will include ensuring that the settings are tightly set; that geolocation settings on photographs and all locations are switched off to make sure that inappropriate viewers are unable to find them; that profile settings are carefully considered to preserve privacy and to prevent unwanted contacts etc.; it could also be set so that only specified individuals can respond to any

postings or remarks. Groups of friends or Pony Club branches could consider setting up a private group which cannot be read or accessed by anyone who is not a registered member of the group.

If anyone is being harassed or concerned by messages posted on their Facebook or other social media sites, it is important that the concerns are reported to Facebook or the local Police so that the relevant agencies can monitor the situation.

Further information can be found in the guidance documents to be found on the Pony Club website:

- E-Safety Guidance for Officials Employees and Volunteers;
- E-Safety Guidance for Parents and Guardians;
- E-Safety Guidance for Young People;
- Social Networking; and
- Best Practice for Social Media,

The charity "South West Grid For Learning" (<https://swgfl.org.uk/>) also has a great deal of advice, information, resources and tools for professionals and parents about keeping children safe on-line.