

An Introduction to PREVENT

The *Prevent* strategy, published by the government in 2011, is part of our overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim of the *Prevent* strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people **becoming** terrorists or **supporting** terrorism. In the Act this has simply been expressed as “*prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*”.

The *Prevent* strategy has three specific strategic objectives:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.

Terrorist groups often draw on extremist ideology, developed by extremist organisations; some people who join terrorist groups have previously been members of extremist organisations and have been radicalised by them. The government has defined extremism in the *Prevent* strategy as: “**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**”.

The *Prevent* strategy was explicitly changed in 2011 to deal with all forms of terrorism and target not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. It also made clear that preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism requires challenge to extremist ideas where they are used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups. And the strategy also means intervening to stop people moving from extremist (albeit legal) groups into terrorist-related activity.

Preventing someone from being drawn into terrorism is substantially comparable to safeguarding in other areas, including child abuse, gangs or domestic violence.

Any concerns about a person or group should be raised with your organisations’ Prevent SPoC, reported to the Local Police Prevent team using 101 or via the Anti- terrorist Hotline (0800 789 321).

Police

Prevent is not a police run programme. But the police play an essential role in most aspects of *Prevent* work; they hold information which can help assess the risk of radicalisation, disrupt people engaged in drawing others into terrorism (which includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can

popularise views which terrorists exploit), and support people vulnerable to it. They have a wide range of day-to-day contacts with communities and with other partners with *Prevent* responsibilities. *Prevent* work needs to be part of many aspects of policing including patrol, neighbourhood and safeguarding functions. The police are uniquely placed to tackle terrorism and to challenge the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.

Local Authorities

With their wide-ranging responsibilities, and democratic accountability to their electorate, local authorities are vital to *Prevent* work. Effective local authorities will be working with their local partners to protect the public, prevent crime and to promote strong, integrated communities.

HE/FE

Universities' commitment to freedom of speech and the rationality underpinning the advancement of knowledge means that they represent one of our most important arenas for challenging extremist views and ideologies. However, there is also a risk that some people may use higher education institutions as a platform for drawing people into terrorism. Universities must take seriously their responsibility to exclude those promoting extremist views that support or are conducive to terrorism.

There is an important role for further education institutions, including sixth form colleges, in helping prevent people being drawn into terrorism. It is a condition of funding that all further education providers must comply with relevant legislation and any statutory responsibilities associated with the delivery of education and safeguarding of learners.

Since September 2014, as a result of Ofsted's involvement in the Trojan horse case and increased levels of public awareness, Ofsted's risk-based inspections have increased their focus on fundamental British values and preventing extremism.

Schools

All publicly-funded schools are required by law to teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. They must also promote community cohesion. Independent schools set their own curriculum but must comply with the Independent Schools Standards, which include an explicit requirement to promote fundamental British values as part of a broader requirement to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. These standards also apply to academies, including free schools, as they are independent schools.

Schools should be safe spaces in which children and young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of the terrorist ideology and learn how to challenge these ideas.

Early Years

Having checked with the Department for Education (DfE) the statutory requirements for early years providers are now clear. The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are already implicitly embedded in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage.

Separately, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act also places a duty on early years providers “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” (the Prevent duty). The duty is likely to come into effect from July 2015. Statutory guidance on the duty is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>. DfE will in due course amend the EYFS to reference providers’ responsibilities in the light of the Prevent duty.

Health

Healthcare professionals will meet and treat people who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The key challenge for the healthcare sector is to ensure that, where there are signs that someone has been or is being drawn into terrorism, the healthcare worker is trained to recognise those signs correctly and is aware of and can locate available support, including the Channel programme where necessary.

Prison/Probation/CRC

As an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice, the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is responsible for protecting the public and reducing re-offending through delivery of prison and probation services. There are 122 prisons in England and Wales including 14 prisons operated under contract by private sector organisations. There are around 85,000 prisoners in custody and 150,000 individuals in custody during a 12 month period. NOMS is currently responsible for around 220,000 offenders under probation supervision, subject either to community sentences or to licence conditions after release from custody.

This responsibility for public protection and reducing re-offending gives both prisons and probation services a clear and important role both in working with offenders convicted of terrorism or terrorism-related offences and in preventing other offenders from being drawn into terrorism and the extremist ideas that are used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups.