1.14.14 Identifying and Supporting Children and Young People Vulnerable to Violent Extremism including Radicalisation

Contents

Scope of this chapter

The guidance provides advice on how the home should manage and respond to concerns when children and young people are identified as being vulnerable to violent extremism and / or affected by the radicalisation of others.

Regulations and Standards

England

- **Regulation 12: The protection of children standard**
  Guide to the protection of children standard
- **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**
- **Channel: Vulnerability assessment framework, 2012**
- **Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales**
- **CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism**
- **Prevent strategy online e-learning**

Wales

- **Regulation 26: Safeguarding overarching requirement**
  https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/26/made
- **Regulation 27: Safeguarding policies and procedures**
  https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/27/made

Related legislation

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Act)

Related guidance

Protecting Children from Radicalisation: the Prevent Duty (2015)

Safeguarding Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers – Radicalisation

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

1. Introduction

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, go on to participate in terrorist groups.

There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism, or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. The process of radicalisation is different for every individual and can take place over an extended period or occur within a very short time frame.

Three main areas of concern have been identified for initial attention in developing an awareness and understanding of how to recognise and respond to the threat of children/young people being radicalised:

- Increasing understanding of radicalisation and the various forms it might take, thereby enhancing the skills and abilities to recognise signs and indicators amongst all staff working with children and young people;

- Identifying a range of interventions - universal, targeted and specialist - and the expertise to apply these proportionately and appropriately;

- Taking appropriate measures to safeguard the wellbeing of children living with or in direct contact with known extremists.

All terrorist groups seek to radicalise and recruit people to their cause, and this often involves children and young people. The Government Prevent Strategy has focused on three key objectives to stop people becoming or supporting terrorists:

- Challenging the spread of terrorist ideology;

- Identifying and supporting vulnerable individuals; and

- Working with key sectors and institutions.

Early intervention work is at the heart of the strategy in protecting and diverting people away from being drawn into terrorist activity. **Channel** is a key element of the **Prevent** strategy. It is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation and uses existing collaboration between local authorities and statutory agencies as well as the Police and local community.

2. Understanding and Recognising Risks and Vulnerabilities of Extremism and Radicalisation

Children and young people can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means.

These can include through the influence of family members or friends and/or direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or, increasingly, through the internet. This can put a young person at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to cause **Significant Harm**.

The Government Channel Guidance assesses vulnerability using a framework built around three dimensions:

- Engagement with a group, cause or ideology;

- Intent to cause harm; and

- Capability to cause harm.

The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that staff exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. Radicalisation may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified. Potential indicators of the risk of radicalisation include:

- Use of inappropriate language;

- Possession of violent extremist literature;

- Behavioural changes; increasingly centred around an extremist ideology;

- The expression of extremist views;

- Advocating violent actions and means;

- Association with known extremists;

- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology;

- A change of style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;

- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology.

The above list is not exhaustive and there may be other indicators that the child or young person is at risk of violent extremism and radicalisation.

3. Referral and Intervention Processes

If staff identify any concerns, for example as a result of observed behaviour, incidents or reports of conversations to suggest the child supports terrorism and/or violent extremism, they must report these concerns to the registered manager immediately. The social worker for the child involved must also be informed of the concern as soon as possible. It will be their responsibility to take the concerns forward through the appropriate channels.

Consideration should also be given to the need for an emergency response - this will be extremely rare but examples are where there is information that a violent act is imminent or where weapons or other materials may be in the possession of a young person or member of his or her family. In this situation a 999 call must be made. In addition to contacting the Emergency Services, the placing authority for the child must be advised of the concern immediately.

See also: '**Child and Adult Protection**' and '**Absent Missing Children/Young People Policy**' Procedures.

4. Online Safety

Social media is used not only to promote extremist ideas and engage people, but also as a command structure. Often social media glorifies violence, attracting and influencing many people including children and young people and, in extreme cases, radicalising them. Research has shown that children and young people can be trusting and not necessarily appreciate bias. This can lead to them being drawn into these groups and adopt extremist views. Furthermore, by viewing shocking and

extreme content, young people may become normalised to it. Staff should be vigilant and seek advice from a manager if required. They should also be alert to any concerning extremist literature that the child or young person may have in their possession.

See also: **Staying in Touch, the Safe Use of the Internet, Social Media and Taking Photographs Procedure**

5. What do we mean by the term prevention?

Prevention means reducing or eliminating the risk of individuals or groups becoming involved in terrorism. Prevent involves the identification and referral of those susceptible to violent extremism into appropriate interventions. These interventions aim to stop vulnerable individuals being radicalised. Staff should provide young people with opportunities to explore sensitive or controversial issue, and equip them with the skills and knowledge to recognise and manage risks and make safer choices if required.

6. First Point of Contact and links to school specific policies

This policy also links to '**Prevent and Radicalisation Policy'** within:

Smallbrook School (Please put a link to Smallbrook Prevent and Radicalisation Policy)
   - First Point of Contact: Steve Fleetwood (DSL) and Craig Seretny (Headteacher)

Derwen School (Please put a link to Derwen Prevent and Radicalisation Policy)
   - First Point of Contact: David Glaves (Headteacher)

Overton School (Please put a link to Overton Prevent and Radicalisation Policy)
   - First Point of Contact: Omar Salahuddin (Headteacher)

Bryn Melyn Care
   - First Point of Contact: Melissa Johnson (Operations Director)

8. Revision History

Date last updated: May 2020

Date of next review: May 2021

Date of release: December 2018

End