

Prevent – what does this mean in a school and college context?

The intention of this document is to give advice to police officers whose responsibility it is to engage with school head teachers and college principals, on how to encourage the mainstreaming of *Prevent* within their institution.

Every school and college is unique. Any engagement must be considered in light of local knowledge and issues - not simply repeat the comments made below.

The aim of *Prevent* is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism:

‘**Schools** can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from drugs, gang violence or alcohol. Schools’ work on *Prevent* needs to be seen in this context. The purpose must be to protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and our values.

‘**Colleges** have an important role to play in *Prevent*, particularly in ensuring balanced debate as well as freedom of speech. They also have a clear responsibility to exercise their duty of care and to protect the welfare of their students. Staff can identify and offer support to students who may be drawn into extremism.’¹

This work is often best conducted through partnership solutions, not necessarily through single agency police involvement. Police can advise on referral mechanisms or on issues that are dealt with in school or college.

Prevent should be seen as part of the existing school or college **safeguarding** framework; a local approach to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children and young people from birth to age 19.

Each area of the UK has adopted their own definition of **safeguarding**, but these often include the following phrases: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable children in need to have optimum life chances.

Toolkits and guidance documents The Government published separate *Prevent* guidance for:

Schools (2008): www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/_arc_SOP/Page8/DCSF-00804-2008

Colleges (2009):

www.lsis.org.uk/Services/Publications/Pages/LearningTogethertobeSafeAtoolkittohelpcollegescontribute-to-the-prevention-of-violent-extremism.aspx

Complementary guidance exists for police which provides case studies, and resource suggestions for schools, colleges and police to conduct in partnership:

www.acpo.police.uk/ACPOBusinessAreas/PREVENT/Education.aspx

Schools and colleges can play a role in enabling young people to explore issues like extremism and terrorism, and the wider use of violence in a considered and informed way.

¹ The *Prevent* Strategy (2011)

A UK Youth Parliament survey (2009) indicated that 94% of young people said they thought schools were the best place to discuss terrorism.

New standards for teachers

From September 2012 there are new standards for teachers, which include;

- Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (a direct quote from the *Prevent Strategy*);
- Develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support;
- Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.

Ofsted, the duty to promote community cohesion and The Education Act

Ofsted inspectors must judge the quality of education provided in the school, based on:²

- The achievement of pupils at the school
- The quality of teaching in the school
- The behaviour and safety of pupils at the school.
- The quality of leadership in and management of the school

In addition, inspectors must also consider:

- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school.

Police can offer to assist head teachers with all of these Ofsted inspected areas, though it is suggested that police are best positioned to assist with:

(a) The behaviour and safety of pupils. For example to:

- Offer to attend 'behaviour & welfare panels'
- Offer presentations to pupils, teachers and parents on safety, including internet safety
- Become involved with Restorative Justice.

(b) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school, for example help students to:

- Reflect on beliefs and values
- Develop and apply an understanding of right and wrong in school and life outside school
- Develop awareness of and respect for diversity in relation to, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation and disability
- Gain a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them
- Develop the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate fully in democratic Britain
- Understand and appreciate the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life.

State maintained schools have a duty to promote community cohesion. Whilst this duty is no longer part of the Ofsted inspection, it is unlikely that a school will achieve an 'outstanding' Ofsted inspection grade, if they cannot evidence their duty to promote community cohesion. All head teachers want their school to receive an Ofsted inspection mark of outstanding and should welcome ideas and resources from police and partners, on ways to achieve this. Ofsted inspectors receive training in identifying extremism within schools, within the context of safeguarding; police can assist by providing advice to head teachers.

The Education Act 1996: Places a duty on governing bodies and head teachers to:

- Forbid the pursuit of partisan political activities by pupils or the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in a maintained school (S.406)
- Secure balanced treatment of political issues (S.407).

² Taken from *The Ofsted School Inspection Handbook* (2012)

Although the majority of young people who become involved with extremist groups do so after leaving school, there have been some cases of young people starting down a path of radicalisation while still of school age. The **Channel project** has managed pupils thought to be at high risk, in the pre-criminal space. This project will need to be explained to school staff.

Further details available at www.pnct.pnn.police.uk/2012/reference_12/prevent/channel.html

Different kinds of schools and colleges

There are a number of different kinds of institution. For example, Schools: State maintained; Community; Foundation; Voluntary aided; Academy; Free; Extended; Pupil Referral Unit; Independent; Supplementary.

Colleges: Sixth form; General Further Education (FE); Technical; Vocational.

Police officers should familiarise themselves with the institution they are working with, before they begin their engagement.

Supplementary provision

There are a range of supplementary schools that provide education outside of normal school hours. For example, Brownies, Scouts, madrassas, Sunday schools etc. An understanding of what is provided would be useful to police, so that offers of assistance and support can be made.

Additional Information related to colleges

Colleges have a clear and unambiguous role to play in helping to safeguard vulnerable young people from radicalisation and recruitment by terrorist organisations. However research by iCoCo³ indicates that the college sector is the least engaged, with only 40% of colleges liaising with the police.

The following is part of the *Prevent* plan for colleges. Police can support these plans by providing local advice and support to colleges where necessary:

- Help colleges better understand the risk of radicalisation on and off campus and secure wider and more consistent support from institutions of most concern;
- Work to ensure that all institutions recognise their duty of care to students to protect them from the consequences of their becoming involved in terrorism, and take reasonable steps to minimise this risk;
- Create better links between universities, colleges, local authorities and communities engaged in *Prevent* work;
- Establish links between universities and colleges and local programmes to support people vulnerable to radicalisation;
- Work with the police and other partners to ensure that student societies and university and college staff have the right information and guidance to enable them to make decisions about external speakers.

Student Services: these members of staff in college are important as they support those students who are vulnerable. These staff should be offered advice and support by police.

Hire of school or college premises: police can assist institutions on how to ensure their hire protocols prevent extremists from using premises to promote hatred and extreme views.

External speakers & student societies: Some colleges have regular external speaker and active student societies: police can provide advice and support to institutions where this is needed.

³ Institute of Community Cohesion: Promoting Community Cohesion and preventing violent extremism in Higher and Further Education (2011)

Ofsted inspection framework for colleges⁴

Ofsted inspects Further Education colleges and sixth form colleges (known as 'providers'). Police can offer advice and support in a range of ways, but particularly under the following criteria: (correct at April 2012)

A: Outcomes for Learners

A3: How safe do learners feel?

- Provide presentations, offer safety advice including internet safety.

A4: Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well-being?

- Offer to host debates, Q&A panels

A5: How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?

- Offer table-top exercises, mentoring.

B: Quality of Provision

B3: How effectively does the college use partnerships to develop its provision to meet learners needs?

- Offer curriculum opportunities

C: Leadership and Management

C3: How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?

- Advise staff and leaders on safeguarding as well as discrimination/diversity

Resources and Training

There are a number of very good training resources for staff as well as excellent resources for use in schools and colleges:

Examples for use with staff:

- WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of *Prevent*): produced by the Home Office
- Operation Hindsight: a discussion exercise produced by the ACPO *Prevent* Delivery Unit

Examples for use in class by teachers:

- Act Now - counter terrorism exercise: from ACPO *Prevent* Delivery Unit
- Challenging Extremism DVD: GOT Project (South Wales)
- North West schools resource pack: Lancashire Constabulary

The 4 Rs

RISK: Young people often present some form of risk

RESPONSIBILITY: Teachers have a responsibility to minimise risk

REFERRAL: Existing referral mechanisms should be used

RELATIONSHIPS: Use partnership relationships

Effective professional relationships minimise risk

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⁴ Handbook for the Inspection of FE (2012)