Anti-Radicalisation Policy

Radicalisation and Extremism

Radicalisation is defined as "a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social or religious ideals and aspirations that (1) reject or undermine the status quo or (2) reject and /or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice."

Extremism is defined as "Vocal, or active opposition to fundamental British Values including democracy, the role of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs."

Schools are now inspected on their policies surrounding radicalisation and extremism in the School.

Inspection Handbook, January 2015 defines Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education (SMSC) as…"Acceptance and engagement with fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs"

Educational settings are the front line agency in any locality. They have the most regular contact with young people and their families. Settings, through their ethos, and through the curriculum are best placed to promote respect, tolerance, and an understanding of our multi-cultural, multi faith society.

The challenge for all schools is to be aware of when the natural tendencies of students or adults, to challenge and to question, develop into extreme views which promote or encourage hate and/or violent actions towards others on the basis of an ideological belief.

Being drawn into terrorism 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.

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

The Prevent duty is not intended to limit discussion of these issues. Schools should, however, be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues.

All staff should be aware of the issue of radicalisation and extremism and the sensitivities that go with it. The Managing Director, Darren Aydin, is the PREVENT officer for LLA.

Safeguarding students and young people against radicalisation and violent extremism

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 "places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other students' service providers to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent duty)."

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. "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" (HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011). Since the publication of the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard students, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been attempts to radicalise vulnerable students and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Keeping students safe from these risks is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as safeguarding students from other risks. Students should be protected from messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to extreme Islamist ideology, or to far Right/Neo-Nazi/White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Prevent, in the context of counter-terrorism, is intervention before any criminal offence has been committed with the aim of preventing individuals or groups from committing crimes. The current threat to the UK is severe and very likely. The biggest threat is from ISIL but there is a significant growth in far right activity in the UK. The groups have a wide appeal and recruit via relationships and social contact. There is not a single profile but vulnerable students are at a higher risk. At Leeds Language Academy all staff are safeguarding trained, and teachers and support staff have been briefed on the prevent strategy with supporting documents.

Risks

Students 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 lead to them suffering significant harm. This may take the form of a "grooming" process where the vulnerabilities of a young person are exploited to form an exclusive friendship which draws the young person away from other influences that might challenge the radical ideology.

The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that practitioners exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified. On-line content, in particular social media, may pose a specific risk in normalising radical views and promoting content that is shocking and extreme; students can be trusting and not necessarily appreciate bias that can lead to them being drawn into these groups and adopt their extremist views.

There is some evidence that specific groups such as young Muslim women have been targeted for radicalisation and grooming, leading to attempts to travel to the Middle East and place themselves at risk.

Indicators

There is no standard template for radicalisation, but issues that may make an individual vulnerable to radicalisation can include:

- Identity Crisis - Distance from cultural / religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them;
- Personal Crisis - Family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
- Personal Circumstances - Migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
- Unmet Aspirations - Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of community values;
- Criminality - Experiences of imprisonment; previous involvement with criminal groups.

However those closest to the individual may first notice the following changes of behaviour:

- Use of inappropriate language;

- Possession of violent extremist literature;
- Behavioural changes;
- The expression of extremist views;
- Advocating violent actions and means;
- Association with known extremists;
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology.

It should be borne in mind that someone radicalised over the internet may exhibit little change in behaviour. Practitioners should ensure that assessments examine behaviour in the family and the social context of the young person, and include information about the young person's peer group and conduct and behaviour at school. Holding radical or extreme views is not illegal, but inciting a person to commit an act in the name of any belief is in itself an offence. The safeguarding aim should be to engage with the young person and, if there is a cause for concern, to ensure that such views are constructively challenged before an offence is committed.

Protection and Action to be taken

Any member of staff identifying concerns about a student should report them to Darren Aydin (Managing Director and PREVENT officer) or Daniela Prataviera (Director of Studies), who will discuss these concerns with the relevant authority. LLA will not be responsible for any action taken from this point, and involved parties will only in informed at the say of the authorities.

Students who report concerns about classmates will, as far as possible, not be identified outside of the school management for their own safety. The same will be for staff or associates that raise any concerns, though any making an accusation may need to be available for police/agency questioning. False accusations of any kind by anyone will be treated very seriously and may result in termination of registration.

Consideration will be given to the possibility that sharing information with parents/family members may increase the risk to the student and therefore may not be appropriate. However, experience has shown that family are key in challenging radical views and extremist behaviour and should be included in interventions unless there are clear reasons why not. Wherever possible, the response will be appropriately and proportionately provided from within the normal range of universal provision of our organisation working with other local agencies and partners. Responses could include curriculum provision, additional tutoring or mentoring, additional pastoral support within and out of school.

All students will be encouraged to participate in the local community and integrate through promotion of local activities and celebration of British culture in order to further promote British values. Students will also be encouraged through classroom personalisation, festival celebrations and promotion of events to share their own culture with other students. This will lead students to an appreciation of other cultures, nationalities and backgrounds.