

Prevent

What is the Prevent strategy?

Prevent is a government strategy designed to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorist or extremist causes. The Prevent strategy covers all types of terrorism and extremism, including the extreme right wing, violent Islamist groups and other causes.

How does the Prevent strategy apply to schools? From July 2015 all schools (as well as other organisations) have a duty to safeguard children from radicalisation and extremism. This means we have a responsibility to protect children from extremist and violent views the same way we protect them from drugs or gang violence. Importantly, we can provide a safe place for pupils to discuss these issues, so they better understand how to protect themselves.

What does this mean in practice?

Many of the things we already do in school to help children become positive, happy members of society also contribute to the Prevent strategy. These include:

- Exploring other cultures and religions and promoting diversity
- Challenging prejudices and racist comments
- Developing critical thinking skills and a strong, positive self-identity
- Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, as well as British values such as democracy

We will also protect children from the risk of radicalisation, for example by using filters on the internet to make sure they can't access extremist and terrorist material, or by vetting visitors who come into school to work with pupils.

Prevent at St. Aidan's CE High School

St. Aidan's recognises that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children and so these issues must be addressed as a safeguarding concern. Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of young people. Education is a powerful tool to challenge this; equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way.

St. Aidan's will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that pupils are enriched, valued, tolerant of difference, understand diversity, and do not feel marginalised. We are aware that young people may be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age, which can emanate from a variety of sources, including the media and internet. At times pupils may themselves reflect or display views that can be discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language. Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views displayed by pupils or staff will need to be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in-line with school policies such as the Pupil Behaviour and Attendance Policy or the Staff Code of Conduct.

As part of safeguarding responsibilities school staff are alert to:

- Pupils disclosing their exposure to extremist actions, materials, or the views of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where pupils have not actively sought these out.
- Graffiti symbols, writing or artwork promoting extremist messages or images.
- Pupils accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites.
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendships or actions and requests for assistance
- Partner schools, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools or settings.
- Pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives.
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence.
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or (in line with our equalities policy) views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture.
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others.
- Anti-British views.

At St. Aidan's we follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, including criteria for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation. In the event of concerns about a person at risk of becoming radicalised, contact will be made with North Yorkshire Constabulary's Prevent Team to consider whether it is appropriate to refer the individuals to the Channel process. Channel is a bespoke multi-agency approach which uses early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face. Referrals can be made by anyone who has concerns. The Channel Panel is chaired by the local authority and meets at regular intervals to discuss referrals on individuals who have been identified as being at risk of radicalisation but have not committed any terrorism offence. For further details visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Frequently Asked Questions

How does Prevent relate to British values?

Schools have been required to promote British values since 2014, and this will continue to be part of our response to the Prevent strategy. British values include:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

Is extremism really a risk in our area?

Extremism can take many forms, including political, religious and misogynistic extremism. Some of these may be a bigger threat in our area than others. We will aim to develop children's own skills to protect themselves from any extremist views they may encounter, now or later in their lives.

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in St. Aidan's, whether from internal sources – pupils, staff, governors or external sources – school community, external agencies or individuals. Pupils need to see St. Aidan's as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues openly and where teachers encourage and facilitate this. We have a duty to ensure this happens.

KEY TERMS

Extremism – vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Ideology – a set of beliefs.

Terrorism – a violent action against people or property, designed to create fear and advance a political, religious or ideological cause.

Radicalisation – the process by which a person comes to support extremism and terrorism.

Further information available here: [Parents: protecting your child from extremism \(2019\) - Educate Against Hate](#)