



Prevent Policy

Reviewed by:	Henrietta Jordan, Schools Director
Date:	1 September 2026
Last reviewed on:	1 September 2025
Next review due by:	31 August 2027
Version control:	6
Approved by:	Tracey Storey, CEO

Ethos

The Company and our schools are committed to providing a secure environment for all our learners and staff. We promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We teach and encourage learners to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith. It is our most fundamental responsibility to keep our learners safe and prepare them for life in modern Britain and globally.

We recognise that, as in all schools, there is a risk that learners could be drawn into extremism and radicalisation. Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard learners and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both regionally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable learners to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist, or prejudice-based violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

The school values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both learners and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. Freedom, however, comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate those vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the values of our school, which include equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The school is clear that extremism and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern. We welcome our duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism." This duty is known as the Prevent Duty.

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources – learners, staff or governors, or external sources - external agencies or individuals.

It is imperative for our learners that school is a safe place where they can discuss and explore controversial issues safely and in an unbiased way, and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this. We are mindful of our legal duties on impartiality and take a reasonable and proportionate approach. Please also refer to our Nonpartisan Policy.

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 weapon against this; equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way.

Purpose and Scope

The Prevent duty is part of the Company's wider safeguarding responsibilities. This policy explains how Melrose Education and its schools will have due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

- It applies to all learners, staff, agency workers, volunteers, directors, contractors, visitors and speakers.
- It applies to activity on school premises, off-site provision, educational visits, remote learning, online activity using school systems and events or services delivered in the school's name.
- It covers concerns about children and adults. Where this policy uses the word "learner", the same safeguarding principles apply to any child or young person educated by the school.
- Prevent concerns may exist alongside other safeguarding, early help, mental health, SEND, criminal exploitation or social care needs. These processes can run at the same time.
- This policy does not replace emergency, child protection, police, behaviour, staff conduct or whistleblowing procedures.

Policy Principles

- Prevent aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- A Prevent referral should be considered where there is concern that a person may be on a pathway that could lead to terrorism.
- Staff will use professional judgement, supported by training, the Notice, Check, Share procedure and the National Referral Form.
- There is no single profile, checklist or pathway that identifies radicalisation. Concerns will be considered in context and without stereotyping.
- A clear, identifiable ideology is not required before a concern can be referred. Equally, lawful protest, criticism of government, religious observance, identity, strong opinions or non-violent activism do not, by themselves, meet the Prevent threshold.
- Mental ill-health, trauma, disability, SEND or neurodivergence may be relevant contextual factors, but they neither cause radicalisation nor remove the need to act on credible Prevent concerns.
- The school will protect freedom of expression and provide safe, age-appropriate opportunities to discuss controversial issues. It will also challenge language or conduct that promotes terrorism, legitimises terrorist violence, dehumanises others or creates a permissive environment for terrorism.
- Decisions will be child-centred, proportionate, evidence-informed, properly recorded and consistent with equality, data protection and political impartiality duties.

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy has been prepared with regard to the following legislation and guidance;

- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, including sections 26, 29, 36 and 38](#)
- [Terrorism Act 2000](#)
- [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014, including the safeguarding standard](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026](#)
- [Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales \(2023\)](#) (updated March 2024)
- [Key Principles of Prevent](#) (Home Office, February 2026)
- [Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting People Susceptible to Radicalisation](#) (updated October 2025)
- [The Prevent Duty: Safeguarding Learners Vulnerable to Radicalisation](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR](#)
- [Political impartiality in schools](#)

The words “must” and “should” are used in this policy in the same way as statutory guidance: “must” identifies a legal requirement; “should” identifies an expectation that will be followed unless there is a sound and recorded reason not to do so.

Definitions and Referral Threshold

- **Prevent:** the part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy that aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It is an early-intervention and safeguarding programme.
- **Radicalisation:** the process of a person legitimising support for, or the use of, terrorist violence.
- **Terrorism:** the use or threat of serious violence, serious damage to property or serious interference with an electronic system, where the action is designed to influence government or intimidate the public and is carried out to advance a political, religious, racial or ideological cause, as defined by the Terrorism Act 2000.
- **Extremism:** the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Extremism alone is not automatically sufficient for a Prevent referral; the key question is whether the person may be on a pathway that could lead to terrorism.

- **Susceptibility:** circumstances in which a person may be open to, influenced by or moving towards terrorist ideas or activity. A person may be susceptible without having an established ideology or a recognised vulnerability.
- **Channel:** a voluntary and confidential, local-authority-led, multi-agency programme that provides tailored support to people assessed as susceptible to being drawn into terrorism.
- **National Referral Form (NRF):** the standard form used to submit a Prevent referral to the locally agreed police or local authority route.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Directors

- Ensure that the Company and each school comply with the Prevent duty and current safeguarding guidance.
- Appoint a senior strategic lead with sufficient authority, knowledge and resources to oversee Prevent delivery.
- Ensure that each school has a named DSPL who leads Prevent operationally and suitable deputy cover at all times.
- Receive assurance that each school maintains a current, site-specific Prevent risk assessment and action plan.
- Ensure appropriate training, referral arrangements, filtering and monitoring, curriculum provision, speaker controls and record keeping are in place.
- Review anonymised themes, audit findings and actions at least annually and ensure identified weaknesses are addressed promptly.

Schools Director and Strategic Company Prevent Lead

- Provide strategic oversight, advice and challenge across all schools.
- Maintain awareness of national, regional and local threats and communicate relevant changes to principals and DSPLs.
- Ensure that Prevent is included within the termly safeguarding audit and that school action plans are followed up.
- Support schools with complex cases without delaying a referral or emergency action.
- Coordinate policy review and group-wide training and report material compliance concerns to the CEO.

Principal

- Promote a safeguarding culture in which staff understand that Prevent is everyone's responsibility.
- Provide the DSPL with time, authority, training, information and resources to undertake the role.
- Ensure the site-specific risk assessment, action plan, local contacts and staff procedures are current and understood.
- Ensure the curriculum, external speaker arrangements, premises use, online safety and staff conduct are consistent with this policy.
- The principal may be consulted about a referral, but the DSPL does not require the principal's permission to make one and consultation must never delay action.

Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead and Deputies

- Act as the school's Prevent lead and source of advice and support for staff.
- Know the local Prevent referral route, current National Referral Form, police contacts and Channel arrangements.
- Assess concerns using Notice, Check, Share and decide promptly whether a Prevent referral or another safeguarding response is required.
- Make or coordinate referrals, share further information with police where relevant and cooperate with Channel panels as reasonably required.
- Ensure that wider support continues while a Prevent concern is assessed.
- Maintain accurate, secure records of concerns, decisions, referrals, advice and outcomes.
- Consider necessary information sharing when a learner transfers to another setting, including direct DSPL-to-DSPL discussion where significant concerns exist.

- Review the Prevent risk assessment and action plan at least annually and following a significant incident, referral, local threat change or material change to the school.

All staff, Volunteers and Contractors

- Complete required Prevent and safeguarding training and know how to report a concern.
- Remain professionally curious and alert to changes or behaviour that may indicate a safeguarding concern.
- Record and share concerns with the DSPL or deputy immediately, using the learner's own words wherever possible.
- Do not investigate, search for additional terrorist material, promise confidentiality or confront a suspected radicaliser.
- Take immediate action where there is a risk of harm or a suspected crime.
- Use the whistleblowing and escalation procedures where they believe appropriate action has not been taken.

Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan

Each school will maintain its own written Prevent risk assessment and action plan. A group-level assessment does not replace the need to understand the circumstances of each school.

- The assessment will be proportionate to the school's location, phase, learner profile, size, curriculum, online environment, staffing and use of premises.
- It will consider risks to and from learners and staff, including online radicalisation and targeted violence concerns.
- It will be informed by local authority and police advice, local safeguarding partners, counter-terrorism local information where available, referral themes and relevant national developments.
- It will consider risks arising from social media, gaming, forums, chat functions, encrypted messaging, algorithms, conspiracy narratives, generative AI and access to terrorist content.
- It will consider visitors, external speakers, contractors, off-site providers, remote delivery, events, premises hire and community use.
- It will identify existing controls, gaps, further actions, named owners, deadlines and how completion will be evidenced.
- It will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following a relevant incident, referral, inspection finding, local threat change or significant change to provision.
- The school may use the DfE Prevent risk assessment template but must tailor it to the actual setting.

Recognising and Assessing Concerns

There is no single profile or definitive list of indicators. Staff must consider the whole context, the person's own words and actions, patterns over time, protective factors and the possibility of other safeguarding explanations.

Behaviour that does not, by itself, establish a Prevent concern

- Holding or expressing strong, conservative, religious, political or unpopular opinions that do not advocate violence or terrorism.
- Criticising government policy or taking part in lawful protest or campaigning.
- Changing clothing, appearance, friendship groups, faith, identity or interests.
- Taking an interest in current affairs, religion, politics, conflicts or social justice.
- Using social media or supporting a lawful cause.

These matters may still require a supportive conversation or another safeguarding response, but assumptions must not be made on the basis of race, religion, nationality, immigration status, disability, SEND, neurodivergence, mental health, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or any other protected characteristic.

Factors That May Warrant Further Checking

- A concerning or unexplained change in behaviour, language, relationships or online activity.
- Increasing isolation, grievance, victimisation narratives, conspiracy thinking or rigid "us and them" language.
- Repeated discriminatory or dehumanising language, particularly where linked to support for violence.
- Interest in extremist influencers, terrorist groups, propaganda, manifestos or material that glorifies terrorism.
- Accessing, requesting, producing or sharing extremist or terrorist content.
- Contact with people or groups known or suspected to encourage terrorist ideology or violence, online or offline.
- Legitimising or justifying terrorist violence, mass casualty attacks or the use of violence to advance a cause.
- Fixation with weapons, explosives, massacres or mass violence without a reasonable context.
- Expressing intent to travel to a conflict zone, join a proscribed organisation, carry out violence, recruit others or provide material support.
- Possessing plans, target lists or detailed preparations for violence, or making credible threats.

A clear ideology may not yet be identifiable. The question is whether the available information gives concern that the person may be on a pathway that could lead to terrorism.

SEND, Neurodivergence, Trauma and Mental Health

- Communication differences, special interests, literal language, emotional dysregulation or mental ill-health must be understood in context and with appropriate specialist advice.
- Staff must not assume that SEND, neurodivergence, trauma or mental ill-health causes radicalisation.
- Credible terrorism-related concerns must not be dismissed or explained away solely because a person is neurodivergent or experiencing mental ill-health.
- Reasonable adjustments must be made when speaking with the learner, assessing information and arranging support.
- Mental health, social care or SEND support may run alongside Prevent, but those services do not replace specialist terrorism-risk assessment.

Responding to a Concern: Notice, Check, Share

- **Notice.** Identify and record what was seen, heard, disclosed or found. Use the person's own words, include dates and context, and distinguish fact from professional opinion.
- **Check.** Share the concern with the DSPL or deputy without delay. The DSPL will check relevant safeguarding information, consider context and protective factors, and where appropriate speak with the person and/or parents or carers. Staff must not undertake their own investigation.
- **Share.** Where there is concern that the person may be on a pathway that could lead to terrorism, the DSPL or deputy will submit a Prevent referral through the locally agreed route using the current National Referral Form. Other safeguarding referrals may be made at the same time.

(Please see Flowchart on Appendix 1)

Immediate Danger or Suspected Crime

- Call 999 immediately where there is an imminent threat to life, a weapon, a planned attack, immediate travel to join a proscribed organisation or another emergency.
- Contact police promptly through 101 or the locally agreed route where criminal activity or a non-immediate terrorism concern is suspected.
- Follow the school's lockdown, emergency, safeguarding and site security procedures as appropriate.
- Do not delay police contact while seeking internal approval or completing a Prevent referral.

Escalation and Professional Disagreement

- If the DSPL is unavailable, staff must contact a deputy DSPL or the principal. Robust DSPL cover must ensure concerns are acted on without delay.
- If a member of staff believes the response is inadequate, they must escalate to the principal, Schools Director or CEO, in line with safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures.
- Any frontline professional may make a Prevent referral where they believe a person may be on a pathway that could lead to terrorism. Internal consultation is expected but must not prevent or delay a necessary referral.
- Concerns about the principal must be reported to the Schools Director or CEO. Concerns about the CEO or a director must be raised through the whistleblowing procedure and, where required, directly with the appropriate external authority.

Prevent Referrals and Channel

- The school will use the current [National Referral Form](#) and the local referral route supplied by the local authority or police.
- Prevent practitioners may provide general advice, training and guidance. They do not decide whether the school should make a referral.
- Specialist police officers receive and assess Prevent referrals. The school is not required to determine the ideology, label the concern or decide whether the Prevent threshold is met before referring.
- Police may seek further information. Any new or material information that emerges while the referral is being assessed will be shared promptly.
- Where police assess that a referral may require multi-agency support, it may be passed to a local Channel panel.
- The Channel panel decides whether the case should be adopted and agrees to a tailored support plan. The school will cooperate as reasonably required and may be asked to attend.
- Channel is voluntary and confidential. Consent is required before Channel support is delivered. For a learner under 18, consent will normally be obtained from a parent, guardian or the agency with responsibility for the learner's care.
- A refusal of Channel support does not remove other safeguarding responsibilities. Police and partner agencies will consider how any continuing risks should be managed.
- Where a referral does not progress through Prevent, the DSPL will consider alternative or continuing support, including early help, children's social care, mental health services, SEND support, pastoral intervention or police action.

Parents, Carers, Consent and Information Sharing

- The school will normally work openly with parents and carers and involve them where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- The DSPL will decide whether and when to inform parents, taking account of the learner's best interests, the risk to the learner or others, the integrity of any police assessment and advice from relevant agencies.
- A Prevent referral is a safeguarding information-sharing decision and does not always require consent. Information may be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis and sharing is necessary and proportionate to safeguard a person or the public.
- Parents will not be informed before a referral where doing so may increase risk, place someone at risk of harm, lead to evidence being concealed or prejudice a police or safeguarding assessment.
- Only relevant, accurate and proportionate information will be shared, through secure routes and with appropriate records of the decision.
- Channel support itself is voluntary and requires consent before support is delivered.

Concerns About Staff and Other Adults

- Prevent concerns may relate to employees, agency staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors, speakers, directors or other adults connected with the school.
- Concerns about an adult must be reported immediately to the principal and DSPL. Where the concern relates to the principal, it must be reported to the Schools Director or CEO.
- The school will consider the safeguarding, HR, disciplinary, low-level concern, allegations, whistleblowing, police and Prevent routes as appropriate.
- An employment or conduct process must not delay a necessary Prevent referral or police report.
- Where an adult presents an immediate risk, the school will take steps to protect learners and staff, including removing access to learners, premises or systems where lawful and appropriate.

Curriculum, Fundamental British Values and Safe Discussion

- The curriculum will help learners develop critical thinking, media literacy, digital resilience and the confidence to challenge extremist and terrorist narratives.
- The school will actively promote each fundamental British value by name: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Teaching will be age-appropriate, accessible and adapted to learners' communication, cognition, SEND and emotional needs.
- Learners will have safe opportunities to discuss sensitive and controversial issues, including terrorism, conflict, misinformation and extremist ideas, without being shamed for asking questions.
- Political issues will be presented in a balanced manner. Staff will not promote partisan political views or present contested political opinions as fact.
- Staff will distinguish lawful views from support for terrorism and will challenge prejudice, racism, misogyny, antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, anti-LGBT hostility and other dehumanising narratives.
- Curriculum leaders will be able to show where Prevent-related knowledge and fundamental British values are taught, reinforced and understood by learners.
- External materials and organisations will be checked for suitability, accuracy, quality, impartiality and consistency with safeguarding duties.

Online Safety, Filtering and Monitoring

- The school will use Smoothwall filtering and monitoring systems that reduce access to terrorist and extremist content without unreasonably restricting legitimate teaching, safeguarding or research.
- Filtering and monitoring will apply appropriately to learner and staff accounts, school-owned devices, networks and relevant cloud services.
- The DSPL has overall safeguarding responsibility for filtering and monitoring and must understand the systems, alerts, limitations and response arrangements.
- A documented filtering and monitoring review will take place at least once every academic year and following a significant incident or system change.
- The review will involve the DSPL, a senior leader, the responsible director/governance representative and the IT provider and will include appropriate testing and sample checks.
- Alerts involving terrorism or extremism will be reviewed promptly by trained staff and escalated to the DSPL. Records will show the alert, context, action and outcome.
- Staff must not deliberately access, download, forward or store unlawful terrorist content. They should preserve only the minimum information needed for safeguarding, following DSPL or police advice.
- Learners will be taught about online grooming, algorithms, echo chambers, conspiracy theories, extremist influencers, gaming and chat risks, misinformation and safe reporting.
- Filtering and monitoring arrangements will be informed by the school's Prevent risk assessment and will also apply to the safe use of generative AI.

External Speakers, Visitors, Events and Premises Hire

- All external speakers, organisations and relevant events will be subject to proportionate due diligence and approval before they take place. (Please see Hosting Speakers in School or Online Policy)
- Checks may include identity, organisation, purpose, funding, public statements, online presence, proposed content, materials, audience, safeguarding history and any links to extremist or terrorist narratives.
- A written risk assessment will identify whether the activity can proceed, what controls are required and who is responsible for supervision.
- Controls may include agreed content, staff presence, balanced challenge, restricted materials, recording conditions, changes to audience or venue, or cancellation.
- The school will not provide a platform for the encouragement or glorification of terrorism, fundraising for terrorism, recruitment, support for a proscribed organisation or other criminal activity.
- The same standards apply to online speakers, off-site events, funded or branded activities, external providers and premises hired to third parties.
- Contracts and premises-hire agreements will allow the school to refuse, stop or cancel an event where safeguarding or Prevent risks cannot be managed.
- The school will keep a record of checks, decisions, reasons, controls and outcomes.

Training and Induction

- All staff, including temporary and agency staff, will receive Prevent information during induction before or as soon as practicable after beginning work.
- All relevant staff will complete formal Prevent awareness training at least annually via the National College, with updates during the year where local or national risks, guidance or school procedures change.
- Training will be proportionate to role and risk and will cover the referral threshold, Notice, Check, Share, local procedures, online radicalisation, equality, avoiding stereotypes, SEND and mental health context, information sharing and emergency action.
- DSPLs, deputies, principals and staff with specific Prevent responsibilities will complete more detailed referral and Channel training and refresh role-specific training at least every two years, or sooner where required by risk or guidance. ([Regional CONTEST co-ordinators - GOV.UK](#))
- Staff who manage IT, external speakers, events, premises hire, curriculum or contractors will receive training relevant to those functions.
- The Company will maintain training records and check staff understanding through safeguarding audits, supervision, scenarios or knowledge checks.
- Training materials will be authoritative, suitable for the school context and consistent with current government guidance.

Recording, Confidentiality and Transfer

- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons will be recorded promptly on the approved safeguarding recording system.
- Records will use factual, respectful and non-stereotyping language and will preserve the person's own words where relevant.
- The record will identify who was consulted, advice received, the risk assessment, action taken, whether parents were informed, information shared and any follow-up required.
- Prevent and Channel information will be restricted to those who need it for safeguarding, risk management or legal responsibilities.
- Information will be retained, shared and transferred in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, data protection law and records-retention arrangements.
- Before a learner transfers, the DSPL will consider what information is needed by the receiving setting to continue support and manage risk. Significant cases should include a direct DSPL-to-DDSPL conversation.
- Anonymised information may be used for audit, training and governance assurance, provided individuals cannot be identified unnecessarily.

Monitoring, Assurance and Review

- The policy will be reviewed annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, local referral arrangements or identified risks change.
- Each principal and DSPL will review implementation through the school's safeguarding audit and Prevent risk assessment/action plan.
- The Directors will monitor evidence including training completion, staff knowledge, referral pathways, risk assessments, speaker checks, curriculum mapping, filtering and monitoring reviews and completion of actions.
- Lessons from concerns, referrals, Channel involvement, incidents, complaints and inspections will be used to improve practice.
- The policy will be available to staff and published or provided to families where appropriate. School-specific contacts and procedures must be readily accessible to staff.

Related Documentation

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Filtering and Monitoring Procedures
- Fundamental British Values Policy and Curriculum Mapping
- Nonpartisan Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy
- Staff Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND, Mental Health and Wellbeing Policies
- Visitors and External Speakers Procedure
- Data Protection and Information Sharing Policies
- Site Security, Lockdown and Emergency Procedures
- Safer Recruitment Policy

Prevent concern flowchart



1. NOTICE:

A member of staff sees, hears, receives or finds information that may indicate a pathway towards terrorism.



2. RECORD:

Record facts, dates, context and the person's own words. Do not investigate or search for more material.



3. SHARE:

Tell the DSPL or deputy immediately. If there is immediate danger or a suspected imminent attack, call 999.



4. CHECK:

The DSPL checks safeguarding information, context, risk and protective factors and may speak with the person or family where safe and appropriate.



5. DECIDE:

Consider a Prevent referral, police action and any parallel safeguarding, early help, social care, mental health or SEND support.



6. REFER:

Where there is concern that the person may be on a pathway that could lead to terrorism, submit the National Referral Form through the local route.



7. SUPPORT AND REVIEW:

Continue support, share new information with police, cooperate with Channel where required, record the outcome and review risk.