

At a Glance...

Prevention of extremist behaviour / radicalisation

What is this?

The Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism in the Home Office, works to counter the threat from terrorism, via its CONTEST strategy. CONTEST is based on 4 areas of work: pursue: to stop terrorist attacks; prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism; protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack; prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

Prevent work with children and with schools is an important part of the strategy. Schools are important not because there is significant evidence to suggest children are being radicalised – there is not – but because they can play a vital role in preparing young people to challenge extremism and the ideology of terrorism and effectively rebut those who are apologists for it. Schools can help to protect children from extremist views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from drugs, gang violence or alcohol.

North Yorkshire is a safe place in which to live and work and incidents of violent crime are low. However there are vulnerable sites within the county including scientific research laboratories, historical and religious sites, military sites and many crowded places that could be targeted for attack by extremists. Nationally the largest threat to security is from international terrorist organisations such as Al Qaeda or from Irish dissident groups. In North Yorkshire threats of extremism may also include, far right or far left extremist groups, animal rights groups, environmental groups.

What can we do about it?

Research suggests that young people who feel alienated or isolated by ‘push’ factors are more vulnerable to being influenced by the ‘pull’ of a single **narrative** and therefore more susceptible to **radicalisation**. Universal provision around the prevention of violent extremism is embedded within effective mainstream provision. Work to engage children and young people; develop their social and emotional skills; educate them in citizenship, peaceful protest, global learning and e-safety; recognise and support their individual needs; give them a voice; develop community cohesion and so on, already features within the provision of our primary and secondary schools and within other settings where children and young people come together. Effective universal provision should make a young person less susceptible to radicalisation.

Staff, particularly at secondary phase and beyond, should also be made aware of the potential indicators that a young person may be becoming involved in extremism and know how and where to refer any concerns.

Early intervention is crucial

Some factors that may contribute to vulnerability to extremism	Some indicators that a young person may be becoming involved in extremism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of poverty, disadvantage or social exclusion • Conflict with family over religious beliefs and/or lifestyle choices/extreme political views • Identity confusion • Victim or witness to race or religious hate crime • Underachievement • An event or series of traumatic events- global, national or personal • Rejected by peer, faith or social group or family • Recent religious conversion • May possess literature related to extreme views (access via internet?) • Extremist influences • Pressure from peers associated with extremism <p><i>Based on academic research Dr J Cole and Dr B Cole (2009)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming a loner • Obsessed by the internet/social networking sites– and secretive about what they are doing • Un-corporative/disengaged • Abusive/aggressive/extremist views/comments/ threats/language • Fascination/fixation with weapons (eg drawing guns)/chemicals/explosives/ extremist activity/events • Carrying weapons • Changes in relationships/ withdrawal from family • Changes in friendship groups (including adult relationships)/desire to be part of a gang. • Change in behaviour or appearance due to new influences • Seeking to recruit / ‘groom’ others to an extremist ideology • Possession of violent extremist literature • Absence patterns/ emergent travel plans e.g. Syria

Young people may be vulnerable to a range of risks as they pass through adolescence. There is no single profile of a violent extremist and the presence of one or more of the above factors or indicators will not necessarily lead to radicalisation or engagement in violent activity. Every case will need to be considered on an individual basis.

Responding to concerns

Schools and settings should continue to follow **safeguarding** procedures and use the **Common Assessment Framework (CAF)** as tools to support their assessment of vulnerability and the appropriate sharing of information with local partners. Schools are encouraged to work with local police on awareness of community issues and tensions which may also be contributory factors. For secondary schools, your local Behaviour Collaborative is the forum for raising any emerging concerns and for reporting extremist behaviour to the Local Authority (extremist behaviour is a standing item on every collaborative agenda). Please note however, that routine safeguarding procedures and protocols should always take precedence and be adhered to.

<p>Questions to ask yourself if you are concerned about a young person?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the young person involved with? • Who are their peers? • Have there been changes in the young person's behaviour or attitude? • Are there other issues that could be the reason behind the changes? • What could the young person be involved in? • Is this a child protection issue? • Who is being affected who may require a safeguarding response? I.e. the concern may relate to adults as well as young people. 	<p>If you feel that a young person may be at risk of being involved in radicalisation or extremism...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow usual safeguarding procedures, informing the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). • Inform the Headteacher (or Manager if other setting). • Inform the police via your 'Safer Neighbourhood' contact, who will then advise and support further referral as appropriate • Inform your Education Development Adviser: Behaviour Discipline & Attendance who will also advise and support.
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Where else can we go for help?

North Yorkshire Education Development Advisors for advice on the prevention of violent extremism - including curriculum resources and activities, (Clare Barrowman - clare.barrowman@northyorks.gov.uk 01609 536808 or Wendy Jemison - wendy.jemison@northyorks.gov.uk , 01609 532475) or visit the Vulnerable Learner Room on Fronter (Personalised Provision) for access to key guidance documents and resources

Your local Minority Ethnic Achievement Hub School

Guidance/Training/Publications:

North Yorkshire 'Prevent' Toolkit for Schools (secondary phase) – available via Fronter in the Vulnerable Learner Room (Personalised Provision).

'Learning together to be safe: A toolkit to help schools contribute to the prevention of violent extremism' (DCSF 2008)

'Where's the Line?' Online resource for secondary schools helping young people understand and respond to issues around violent extremism www.wherestheline.co.uk

Training or input around this agenda – activity and resources produced and delivered by the police to students – contact Pc Andy Patchett Paul Stephenson, Sarah Widdrington, Youth Action Officers North Yorkshire Police 101 or your Safer Neighbourhood Team.

'Watch Over Me' is a personal safety soap opera for secondary schools based on real-life stories designed to help young people learn how to manage risk and stay safe. The downloadable films provoke discussion and allow teachers to introduce a wide range of challenging topics into the classroom. <http://values-vs-violence.com/watchover.html>

Dot Com Children's Foundation <http://dotcomcf.org/> includes activities and resources around 'dealing with conflict' and 'influences and pressures'. Targeted at KS2.

www.britkid.org free website that promotes understanding of racial diversity. Targeted at KS2 and KS3.

'Keeping children safe in education: information for all school and college staff' DfE (April 2014)