

Extremism & Radicalisation Policy

Soundly Fostering carers and staff will be fully alert to the risks of violent extremism and radicalisation.

Carers are prompt in reporting concerns and understand how to support young people. Staff supervision and risk assessment, internal risk meetings will monitor, prevention, support and indicators of violent extremism and radicalisation.

This policy will be used alongside Safeguarding, Missing and sharing information policies.

Regulations and Standards

The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011

Regulation 11 - Independent Fostering Agencies -duty to secure welfare

Regulation 12 - Arrangements for the protection of children

Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards

Standard 4 - Safeguarding children

Legal

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#)

Relevant Guidance

[Prevent Duty Guidance England and Wales \(2023\)](#)

[Safeguarding Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers – Radicalisation](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)

[Safeguarding Procedures and Reporting Should Be Followed](#)

The Scope of This Chapter

This guidance provides advice on how the agency should manage and respond to concerns of children and young people identified as being vulnerable to all forms of violent extremism and affected by the radicalisation of others.

Introduction

Keeping children safe from these risks is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as safeguarding children from other risks.

“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).

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

There is no obvious profile of a child or young person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a child or young person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. The process of radicalisation is different for every individual and can take place over an extended period or within a very short time frame.

All the terrorist groups that pose a threat seek to radicalise and recruit people to their cause, and this often involves children and young people. Early intervention work is crucial in protecting and diverting people away from being drawn into terrorist activity.

Channel is a key element of the Prevent strategy. It is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation and uses existing collaboration between local authorities and statutory agencies, as well as the Police and local community.

Understanding and Recognising Risks and Vulnerabilities of Extremism and Radicalisation

Children 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 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 cause significant harm.

The Government's Channel Guidance assesses vulnerability using a framework built around three dimensions:

- **Engagement with a Group, Cause or Ideology:** Engagement factors are sometimes referred to as “psychological hooks”. They include needs, susceptibilities, motivations and contextual influences and together map the individual pathway into terrorism.
- **Intent to Cause Harm:** Not all those who become engaged by a group, cause or ideology go on to develop an intention to cause harm, so this dimension is considered separately. Intent factors describe the mindset that is associated with a readiness to use violence and address what the individual would do and to what end.
- **Capability to Cause Harm:** Not all those who have a wish to cause harm on behalf of a group, cause or ideology are capable of doing so, and plots to cause widespread damage take a high level of personal capability, resources and networking to be successful. What the individual is capable of is therefore a key consideration when assessing risk of harm to the public.

The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors, and identifying this risk requires that staff and foster carers exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified.

- Use of inappropriate language;
- Possession of violent extremist literature;
- Behavioural changes; increasingly centred around an extremist ideology;

- The expression of extremist views;
- Advocating violent actions and means;
- Association with known extremists;
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology;
- A change of style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology.

The above list is not exhaustive, and there may be other indicators that the child or young person is at risk of violent extremism and radicalisation.

Referral and Intervention Processes

If staff or carers identify any concerns as a result of observed behaviour or reports of conversations to suggest the child supports terrorism and/or violent extremism, they must report these concerns to the Registered Manager, the Supervising Social Worker or the Out of Hours support.

The child's social worker and the placing authority of the child involved must be informed of the concern as soon as possible. It will be their responsibility to take the concerns forward through the appropriate channels. However, the agency has a responsibility to report in the absence of the local authority if they feel the concern is significant enough.

Consideration should also be given to the need for an emergency response – this will be extremely rare, but examples are where there is information that a violent act is imminent or where weapons or other materials may be in the possession of a young person or member of his or her family.

In this situation, a 999 call must be made. In addition to contacting the Emergency Services, the placing authority for the child must be advised of the concern immediately.

Online Safety

Online content, in particular social media, may pose a specific risk in normalising radical views and promoting content that is shocking and extreme; children can be

trusting and may not necessarily appreciate bias, which can lead to being drawn into such groups and adopting their extremist views.

Foster carers should be vigilant and report any changes in behaviour or attitude. They should also be aware of extremist literature that the child or young person may have in their possession. There is an expectation that foster carers do random checks on children's phones and computers to keep them safe.

The Meaning of the Term 'Prevention'

Prevention means reducing or eliminating the risk of individuals or groups becoming involved in terrorism. Prevention involves the identification and referral of those susceptible to violent extremism into appropriate interventions. These interventions are aimed at stopping the vulnerable from being radicalised.

Extremists will always target the vulnerable in a bid to spread their firmly held, but flawed, ideologies, but we must tackle them at the source and prevent people from being brainwashed into terrorism.

Action To Be Taken

Any safeguarding risk or concerns relating to radicalisation must follow established safeguarding procedures, with a referral being made to the Soundly Fostering Safeguarding Lead.