

Learning together to be safe

A toolkit to help schools contribute to
the prevention of violent extremism



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Introduction

Dealing with violent extremism is nothing new. Throughout history there have been groups prepared to use violence to achieve their aims. Twenty years ago the major threat we faced was from Irish terrorism. Today we face a different threat. A small minority seek to radicalise young people with an ideology which justifies the use of violence through a distorted interpretation of a peaceful religion. While violent extremism influenced by Al Qaida poses the greatest threat to life, other forms of extremism and prejudice are also affecting individuals and communities across the country and can be a catalyst for alienation and disaffection and potentially lead to violence.

We have learnt from past experience that a security response is not enough. We need to address the underlying issues that can attract people towards violent extremist causes. The view expressed on a young woman's blog – *'instead of rappers glamourising gun-crime, it is extremists glamourising terrorism'* – is a reminder of how real this challenge is and the importance of engaging with today's children and young people if we are to make a difference in the longer term.

Our goal must be to empower young people to come together, with their families and the wider community, to expose violent extremists and reject cruelty and violence in whatever form it takes. Schools can make an important contribution, being a focal point for local communities and helping to build mutual respect and understanding.

Extremists of all persuasions try to paint the world as black and white, accentuating division and difference, and exploiting fears based on ignorance or prejudice. Education can be a powerful weapon against this, equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and reflex to think for themselves, to challenge and to debate; and giving young people the opportunity to learn about different cultures and faiths and, crucially, to gain an understanding of the values we share.

Exploring ideas, developing a sense of identity and forming views are a normal part of growing up. Schools can support young people in this: providing a safe environment for discussing controversial

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issues and helping young people understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making. We need to encourage young people to express their views but also to appreciate the impact their views can have on others, to take responsibility for their actions and to understand that the use of violence to further any cause is criminal.

We also need to recognise that, while it remains very rare for school age children to become involved in extremist activity to the point of committing criminal acts, young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, including via the internet, from an early age. As with other forms of criminality or risk of harm, early intervention is always preferable. Schools, working with other local partners, families and communities, can help support pupils who may be vulnerable as part of wider safeguarding responsibilities.

We have spent a lot of time over recent months talking to young people, teachers, local authorities, police and community representatives about the challenge of preventing violent extremism. I have been struck by your commitment and readiness to engage with what is one of the most challenging and important issues facing our society today.

You have asked for more practical advice and support about the positive contribution you can make in partnership with others in your local area. This toolkit aims to do that, building on much of the excellent work already taking place in schools and communities across the country.

The toolkit is not exhaustive, nor does it aim to be prescriptive – local partners will need to work together to develop responses that are tailored to particular communities' needs. For that reason I am asking local authorities to work with the police and others to provide customised information to go alongside the toolkit and to take the lead in ensuring all local schools are aware of the issues and are supported in this work.

Preventing violent extremism must be a shared endeavour. I am grateful to young people and to colleagues across the education community and beyond for their views and input to this work so far. I look forward to working with you further as we move forward together to build more cohesive and resilient communities, helping all children and young people to achieve their potential, make a positive contribution and stay safe.

Ed Balls

Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families

The effects of terrorism and violent extremism have an impact on everyone in society, including young people. Young people from all backgrounds need to be empowered to discuss matters relating to terrorism and preventing violent extremism on their own terms.

'We need more support for teachers who are dealing with such sensitive subjects. As a Muslim myself, to deal with extremism, we have to incorporate all faiths in these discussions. Teachers should be given support and materials which they can use to achieve this.'

Usman Nawaz, age 18, Member of UK Youth Parliament for Rochdale

Aims of the toolkit

In June 2008, the Government published guidance to local partners on preventing violent extremism that emphasised the importance of working with children and young people and encouraged local partnerships to engage with schools and colleges. This toolkit supplements that guidance, responding to calls for more practical advice specifically focused on the education context. It is the product of discussions with young people, teachers, local authorities, police and community representatives across the country.

This toolkit seeks to:

- raise **awareness** amongst schools of the threat from violent extremist groups and the risks for young people
- provide **information** about what can cause violent extremism, about preventative actions taking place locally and nationally and about where schools can get additional information and advice
- help schools understand the **positive contribution** they can make to empowering young people to create communities that are more resilient to extremism, and **protecting the wellbeing** of particular pupils or groups who may be vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremist activity
- provide advice on **managing risks** and responding to incidents locally, nationally or internationally that might have an impact on the school community

The purpose throughout is to support the confidence and capacity of staff and to encourage local partnership working.

Who the toolkit is for

This toolkit is for all primary, secondary and special schools in England including independent schools (it is also relevant for staff in pupil referral units and other alternative provision).

The nature and extent of the threat from violent extremism will vary across the country. However all communities are affected, whether directly or indirectly; and in an increasingly inter-connected world it is important young people are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need for the future regardless of where they go to school. It is therefore important that all schools are aware of the issues and consider what actions are appropriate, in conjunction with local partners.

The toolkit is designed for **school leaders** to use in reviewing school practice and in briefing staff. Certain sections, such as advice on developing the curriculum will be particularly relevant to curriculum leaders and teaching staff.

Status and structure of the toolkit

This toolkit is intended as guidance and does not impose any new requirements on schools. It includes core information sections and practical advice for reviewing school practice and developing partnership working.

The toolkit exists both as a published document and as an on-line resource. The on-line version includes tools to download to review and plan school practice, case studies and a more comprehensive list of links to further information and resources.

Both versions can be accessed via www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/violentextremism/toolkitforschools.

Hard copies of this document can be ordered from Prolog, reference number: 00804-2008BKT-EN

Local authorities will be providing schools with customised information and contact details relevant to their local area to accompany the toolkit. Sections where local information should be sought are indicated.

Building on existing work in schools

The Government's strategy for preventing violent extremism has five strands designed to address the factors that research suggests can cause people to become involved in this form of criminal activity. These are explained on page 13.

In a **school context** the five strands are to:

1. understand how an extremist **narrative** which can lead to harm can be challenged by staff in schools; and model to pupils how diverse views can be heard, analysed and challenged in a way which values freedom of speech and freedom from harm
2. understand how to **prevent harm** to pupils by individuals, groups or others who promote violent extremism, and manage risks within the school
3. understand how to **support individuals** who are vulnerable through strategies to support, challenge and protect
4. increase the **resilience of pupils and of school communities** through helping pupils acquire skills and knowledge to challenge extremist views, and promoting an ethos and values that promotes respect for others
5. use teaching styles and curriculum opportunities which allow **grievances** to be aired, explored and demonstrate the role of conflict resolution and active citizenship

94 per cent of young people think schools are the best environment in which to discuss preventing terrorism and violent extremism

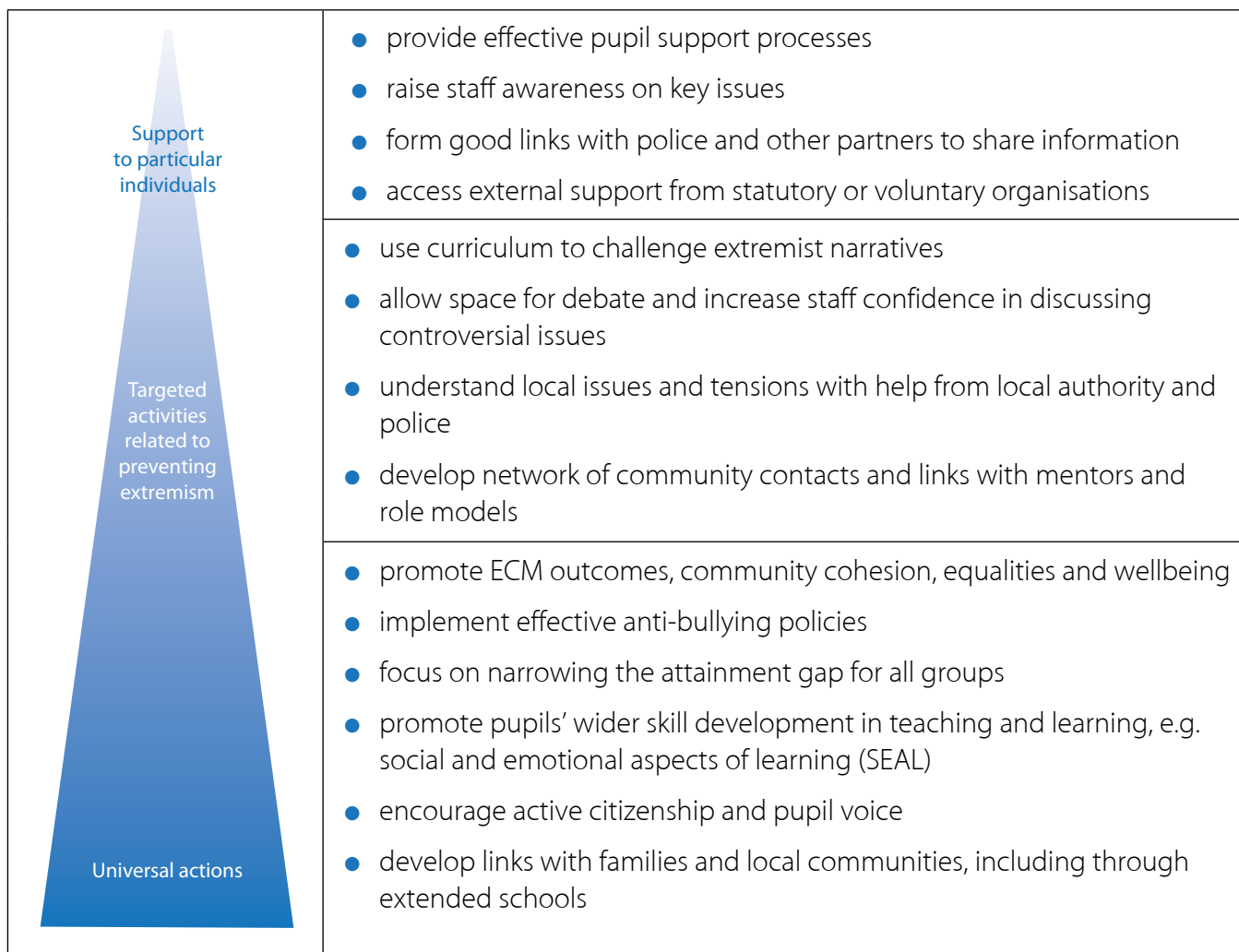
UK Youth Parliament survey published in August 2008

Much of the work all schools will already be doing already will help contribute to the goal of preventing violent extremism. For example, schools can build on work they already do in:

- promoting the Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes for all pupils
- promoting pupil wellbeing, equalities and community cohesion
- building the resilience of the school, working with partners, to prevent pupils becoming the victims or causes of harm
- working with other agencies and parents to build community networks of support for the school

The toolkit provides advice on how schools can review current practice to build on their existing **universal**, **targeted** and **specialist** work and develop it further, in conjunction with other activities that are taking place locally.

A tiered-approach:



The toolkit provides practical advice to schools in four areas. These are summarised in the table below and overleaf.

Leadership and Values

Aim:

an ethos which upholds core values of shared responsibility and wellbeing for all pupils and promotes respect, equalities and understanding

Through:

- promoting the core values of democratic society, pupil voice and participation
- building staff understanding of the issues and confidence to deal with them
- deepening engagement with the communities which the school serves
- modelling positive problem solving
- actively working with partner schools, local authority, police and other agencies to achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes for each pupil

Action by: *governors, leadership team, professional development leaders*

Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum

Aim:

a curriculum and pedagogy which promote knowledge, skills and understanding to build the resilience of pupils and explore controversial issues

Through:

- a curriculum adapted to recognise local needs, challenge extremist narratives and promote universal rights
- teaching and learning strategies which explore controversial issues in a way which promotes critical analysis and pro social values
- use of external programmes or groups to support learning while ensuring that the input supports the school goals and values

Action by: *curriculum managers, staff who lead on links with external groups*

Pupil support processes

Aim:

staff confident to take preventative and responsive steps working with partner professionals, families and communities

Through:

- listening to what is happening in the school and the community
- implementing anti bullying strategies and challenging racist behaviour
- helping pupils and adults know how to access support in school or through community partners
- supporting problem solving and repair of harm
- supporting pupils at risk through safeguarding and crime prevention processes

Action by: *pupil support, staff managers and staff who lead on family and community engagement*

Managing risks and responding to events

Aim:

a school which monitors risks and is ready to deal appropriately with issues which arise

Through:

- understanding the nature of the threat from violent extremism and how this may impact directly or indirectly on the school
- understanding and managing potential risks within the school and from external influences
- responding appropriately to events in the local, national or international news that may impact on pupils and communities
- developing effective ICT security and responsible user policies

Action by: *leadership team, ICT and site managers*

Further information:

If schools have any questions or concerns relating to this toolkit or issues raised within, please contact:

1. your local authority or police schools' liaison or neighbourhood officer; or
2. the Department for Children, Schools and Families at: **community.cohesion@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk**.

Understanding the Issues

This section addresses the need for schools:

- ✓ to understand the nature of the threats (at a local and national level)
- ✓ to be aware of the activities happening locally and nationally to prevent violent extremism
- ✓ to understand how the experiences faced by some pupils, families and communities may contribute to the process of radicalisation and support for extreme violence

1. Understanding the threat nationally and locally

National threats

The Government assesses that the UK is a high priority target for international terrorists aligned with Al Qaida and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. In practice this means a threat from British nationals and UK-based terrorists as well as from foreign terrorists planning attacks from abroad.

The majority of violent extremist networks are located in major urban conurbations such as London, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. However recent arrests in Bristol and Exeter also demonstrate that violent extremists are widely distributed across the UK.

Experience suggests there is no typical profile of UK-based violent extremists influenced by Al Qaida. They can come from a range of geographical areas, from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and include a number of converts to Islam. The nature of support for violent extremist activity varies but can include recruiting others, training, fundraising and procurement of support for terrorist activities. Training can include outward-bound type courses to encourage bonding either in the UK or in camps operated by Al Qaida overseas.

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In addition to the severe threat posed by Al Qaida-influenced groups, dissident Irish republican terrorist groups who oppose the Northern Ireland peace process still pose a threat to British interests. Other UK-based extremist groups including racist and fascist organisations and far-right extremist groups also pose a threat to public order and the British multicultural way of life. These groups often aspire to campaigns of violence against individuals, families and particular communities and, if unchecked, may provide a catalyst for alienation and disaffection within particular ethnic communities. Evidence suggests that the route to violent far-right extremism often begins with organisations seeking to recruit young people and even arranging specific training activities that include encouraging the use of guns and knives.

The Security Service's appraisal of terrorist threats currently facing the UK can be found at:
www.mi5.gov.uk/output/Page16.html

A list of the groups or movements that espouse the use of violence and meet the conditions for being banned – proscribed – under counter-terrorism legislation is at:
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/terrorism-act/proscribed-groups

'As a country, we are rightly concerned to protect children from exploitation in other areas. We need to do the same in relation to violent extremism. As I speak, terrorists are methodically and intentionally targeting young people and children in this country. They are radicalising, indoctrinating and grooming young, vulnerable people to carry out acts of terrorism. This year, we have seen individuals as young as 15 and 16 implicated in terrorist-related activity.'

Director General of the Security Service
speech to the Society of Editors' Annual Conference, 5 November 2007

The local picture

The challenge from violent extremism and activities of different groups will vary across the country. It is important that schools understand and keep up to date with specific local issues affecting their communities. Local authorities and police will be able to help schools gain an overview of current local issues.

Schools can also help local authorities and police understand tensions affecting their pupils. Schools will observe or hear how communities are **feeling**, may witness an **event** that has happened, or be aware that something **might happen**. In all these three types of situation information from schools is important to help the local authority or police gain a whole community view and so protect young people from harm or causing harm.

Schools, in conjunction with local authorities, the police and other agencies should **agree appropriate mechanisms and fora for sharing information** relating to threats or community tensions. This could be as part of existing local tension monitoring arrangements and should build on protocols for monitoring and reporting racist incidents.

i – local information available

2. What the Government is doing to prevent violent extremism

The Government has a **'Prevent'** strategy as part of its overall approach to countering terrorism with the aim of **preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism**.

The Prevent strategy has five strands designed to address the factors that research suggests can cause people to become involved in Al Qaida-associated violent extremism. These factors are also relevant to preventing other forms of violent extremism. The five strands are:

- **challenging** the violent extremist ideology and supporting mainstream voices
- **disrupting** those who promote violent extremism and supporting institutions where they may be active
- **supporting individuals** who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism
- increasing the **resilience** of communities to violent extremism
- **addressing grievances**, both genuine and perceived, that ideologues are exploiting. These can stem from national or international issues – for example relating to foreign policy, or perceptions of distorted media representation; or be based on local perceptions of inequality or experiences of racism or community conflict

Activities are taking place at a local, national and international level under each of the strands, in partnership with community organisations. Many of these activities are focused on working with young people. More detail is available in Government guidance to local partners published in June 2008: www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/violentextremism/preventstrategy.

In addition to the Prevent strategy, there are a range of policies, locally and nationally, to tackle racism and inequalities and to promote cohesion and interfaith relations. These include activities to prevent young people from joining far-right organisations, often falling under the umbrella of preventing hate crime. The Communities and Local Government website explains this: www.communities.gov.uk/communities/about/raceandfaith.

'A strong civil society is one that is not afraid to critique but which has people with the skills and dispositions to engage in this without violence.'

Professor Lynn Davies, 'Educating Against Extremism'
Trentham Books, 2008

Roles of local agencies and partners

The June 2008 guidance encourages local areas to have a preventing violent extremism action plan with activities across all five strands of the Prevent strategy. These will involve a range of partners led by the local authority, the police and other statutory and voluntary agencies and include the active involvement of local communities. The range of activities will vary depending on scale of the challenges in the local area.

All local authorities are monitored against a 'National Indicator' measure of their activity to *'build resilience to violent extremism'*, including the extent of their partnership working. Some local authorities have included this as one of their priority indicators in their Local Area Agreements.

Schools should be included in local partnership working on the prevention of violent extremism and on promoting community cohesion. Local authorities, the police and other partners can also be a source of support and advice for schools on issues concerning extremism and engagement with local community organisations.

***i* – local information available**

3. Understanding the causes of violent extremism

We have a growing body of knowledge about the path followed by those who have become involved with Al Qaida-associated violent extremism from research and from case histories of those who have attempted or perpetrated terrorist acts.

Evidence suggests that this path, or 'radicalisation' process, is not linear or predictable. The length of time taken can differ greatly from a few weeks to years and proceeding down a radicalisation path does not always result in violence.

For some, but not all, of those who have become involved in violent extremism, the transition to *post*-secondary school learning was a crucial time. However the secondary school age period was often when the process of radicalisation started which eventually tipped them into choosing to undertake violent or criminal acts.

Some common factors emerge:

Contact with recruiters

Although there are isolated incidents of 'self-radicalisers', young people will generally become involved in violent extremist movements under the influence of others. Initial contact could be via peers, older siblings, other family members or acquaintances. The process of radicalisation can often be a social one. Interaction is most likely to be outside school settings, often in unsupervised environments such as gyms or cafés, or in private homes.

Access to violent extremist material

Access in the past has often been via leafleting and local contacts but evidence suggests that the internet is now playing a much more important role – both violent extremist videos and propaganda accessed via websites or contact via social networking sites.

Use of extremist narratives

Violent extremists *of all persuasions* usually attract people to their cause through a persuasive narrative:

- to explain why I/my family/my community am/are experiencing disadvantage/suffering/lack of respect e.g. perceived persecution, inequality, oppression by a governing class, national or international politics
- to explain why the conventional family/school/community solutions do not provide answers to the core grievances e.g. 'the law does not protect us, my family is isolated from 'real life' and does not know what it is like for young people'
- and then go on to justify violent or criminal remedies – either in local, or national settings e.g. 'we need to force a change of views, the only way to achieve change is through action' or 'we need to avenge a wrong we have suffered'
- in some cases the cause is part of a wider global movement which may claim a political, ideological or theological basis, however distorted

Extremist narratives have the potential to influence views to varying degrees: inspiring new recruits, helping to embed beliefs of those with established extreme views, or persuading others of the legitimacy of their cause.

Examples of extremist narratives:

- a) Al Qaida and associated groups use a 'single narrative' linking a particular interpretation of history, politics and religion with a number of current grievances – some of which may be quite widely shared by Muslims and non-Muslims alike – to build up a picture of a global conspiracy against Muslims dating back to the crusades. They adopt an extreme interpretation of Islamic teaching that they believe places an obligation to fight and kill to achieve their aims. Most Muslims and the world's leading Islamic scholars reject this interpretation. A fuller description is included in the on-line toolkit.
- b) Far-right extremist ideology provides a hate-based story based on a sense of poverty, discrimination, alienation and threat. It uses local economic and social grievances and distorts analysis of migration, globalisation and history and justifies violence to 'protect the indigenous people'. Far-right groups often associate themselves with the Nazis, or other movements such as the Ku Klux Klan. For example 'Combat 18' is the name adopted by a loose collection of violent activists with extreme right-wing neo-Nazi views. '18' represents Hitler, his initials being the 1st and 8th letters of the alphabet.

What can make a young person susceptible to adopting extremist views and supporting violence?

The key conclusion from available evidence is that there is no single profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism, or single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas.

However it does appear the decision by a young person to become involved in violent extremism:

- may begin with a search for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- may be driven by the desire for 'adventure' and excitement
- may be driven by a desire to enhance the self esteem of the individual and promote their 'street cred'
- is likely to involve identification with a charismatic individual and attraction to a group which can offer identity, social network and support

- is likely to be fuelled by a sense of grievance that can be triggered by personal experiences of racism or discrimination

Lessons from recent case histories about factors that may make young people susceptible to exploitation by violent extremists:

Identity crisis

Adolescents exploring issues of identity can feel both distant from their parents' cultural and religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in society around them. Extremist ideas can help provide a sense of purpose or feeling of belonging.

Personal crisis

This may for example include significant tensions within the family which produce a sense of isolation of the young person from the traditional certainties of family life.

Personal circumstances

The experience of migration, local tensions or events affecting families in countries of origin may contribute to alienation from UK values and a decision to cause harm to symbols of the community or state.

Un- or underemployment

Young people may perceive their aspirations for career and lifestyle undermined by limited school achievement or employment prospects. This can translate to a generalised rejection of civic life and adoption of violence as a symbolic act.

Criminality

A young person may have been involved in group offending or, on occasion, linked to organised crime and be drawn to engagement in extremist, potentially criminal, activities.

There is some similarity with the factors researchers¹ have found are likely to contribute to young people joining racist or far-right groups:

- ideology and politics
- provocation and anger
- need for protection
- seeking excitement and action
- fascination with violence, weapons and uniforms
- youth rebellion
- seeking family and father substitutes
- seeking friends and community
- seeking status and identity

The Quilliam Foundation, an independent UK-based think tank created by former activists who have rejected extremism, has compiled advice on understanding what could indicate a young person is being influenced by Al Qaida-associated extremists, based on the personal experience of its founders. It has also suggested approaches to engage young people to help make them less likely to follow a path of extremism. This is available in the on-line toolkit.

Key points

- **Extremists use persuasive narratives to attract people to their cause** based on a particular interpretation or distortion of history, politics or religion. Education can play a powerful role in encouraging young people to challenge ideas, think for themselves and take responsibility for their actions. The teaching, learning and the curriculum section provides suggestions for how to do this.
- **There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism, or single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas.** The starting point for schools, as in all learning, is knowing their pupils, listening and responding to their

¹ This is based on work by Professor Tore Bjorgo, Research Director, Norwegian Police University College

changing needs. If members of staff do have concerns about behaviour patterns, they should seek advice from other partners and use their professional judgement to consider whether a young person might be at risk. The pupil support and challenge section provides practical advice. Case studies to download to review school practice are available in the on-line toolkit.

- **The particular risks to pupils and for school communities from extremist groups will vary across the country.** Schools should seek advice from their local authorities and the police (via their school liaison police officer or safer neighbourhood team) on their local context and make sure mechanisms are in place to keep abreast of local issues.
- There will be a **range of activities taking place in local areas** aimed at the prevention of violent extremism which may be relevant to schools or the school community. Local authorities can help individual schools to become involved in local partnership working and understand what resources and projects are available locally.

Practical Advice for Schools

Leadership and Values

This sets out how schools can contribute to preventing violent extremism through:

- ✓ specific **leadership roles** including developing **local partnerships**
- ✓ a **values-based** approach

Underpinning the ethos of a school which plays a positive role in preventing violent extremism are **specific values** and **leadership strategies**.

These should be developed, understood and shared by leaders at all levels in the school – governors, the senior leadership team and all staff in their leadership roles – and then made explicit to pupils, parents and the community served by the school. The pupil voice, parent and community engagement processes of the school can inform school improvement planning, self evaluation and policy review.

In preventing violent extremism schools leaders need to:

i) Uphold a clear ethos which:

| | Possible school actions |
|--|---|
| – is based on the promotion of human rights, equalities and freedoms under the law | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>creating explicit value statements that are inclusive of all students</i> – <i>reviewing curriculum and pupil participation and support processes</i> |

| | Possible school actions |
|--|---|
| – promotes critical scholarship and informed moral purpose in engaging pupils with local, national and international issues and grievances | – <i>developing critical personal thinking skills and using curriculum opportunities including small group work</i> |
| – recognises and meets the social and emotional learning needs of pupils and staff | – <i>implementing social and emotional aspects of learning</i> |
| – promotes a shared culture of openness and pluralism in the school and with the wider community, regardless of the specific status, location or faith affiliation of the school | – <i>exploring and promoting diversity and shared values between and within communities</i> – <i>challenging Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and other prejudices</i> |
| – promotes a strong sense of belonging, shared community care and responsibility for others | – <i>focusing support on those at risk of being isolated</i> – <i>building ties with all local communities, seeking opportunities for linking with other schools</i> |
| – challenges any behaviours which harm the ability of individuals and groups to work together and models ways to recognise grievance and repair harm | – <i>using 'Safe to learn' anti-bullying strategies to minimise hate and prejudice based bullying</i> – <i>using restorative approaches to repair harm caused</i> |

School Action: evaluate the evidence which would demonstrate to pupils, staff and the community the school's commitment to these principles

ii) Promote the core values of a democratic society and model the processes by:

| | Possible school actions |
|--|---|
| – upholding the rights to equality under the law by people regardless of gender, age, race, belief, class, ability or disability, sexual orientation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>including clear statements in the induction of pupils, staff, governors and in the curriculum</i> – <i>following the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools approach</i> |
| – promoting the use of due processes to resolve disagreement and to protect the vulnerable | – <i>ensuring fair processes which protect those harmed or affected</i> |
| – modelling participatory and representative democracy by engaging and examining views expressed | – <i>modelling freedom of speech through pupil participation, while ensuring protection of vulnerable pupils and promoting critical analysis of evidence</i> |
| – modelling positive problem solving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>promoting active citizenship to model how perceived injustice can be peacefully challenged</i> – <i>developing restorative approaches to resolve personal conflicts and so repair harm caused</i> |

School Action: review the policies and practice for pupils and staff which encompass democratic values

iii) Build staff understanding of their roles and confidence in their skills:

| | Possible school actions |
|---|--|
| – to build staff awareness of local issues | – <i>reviewing routines for briefing and engaging staff and governors on local issues</i> |
| – to provide the safe place for discussion which can deal with grievances | – <i>developing teaching skills for dealing with controversial issues</i> – <i>providing opportunities for small group supported discussion</i> |
| – to promote the wellbeing of pupils including when vulnerable to group pressures linked to violent extremism | – <i>raising awareness amongst staff of pupil support processes</i> – <i>enforcing safe behaviours in the use of the internet</i> |
| – to play relevant roles in targeted and specialist provision | – <i>ensuring relevant staff are engaged in linking with local provision</i> |
| – in responding to events which affect the school, pupils or local communities | – <i>promoting opportunities for informed discussion</i> – <i>directing pupils and staff to sources of help</i> |

School Action: review professional development needs for staff to build capacity for preventing violent extremism

iv) Deepen engagement with the communities the school serves by:

| | Possible school actions |
|--|--|
| – openness to hearing and understanding tensions within the communities served by the school | – <i>promoting ways for pupils, staff, parents and others to channel concerns to those who can help</i> |
| – being an active partner in community leadership (with other school leaders, statutory agencies and with community groups) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>reviewing how the school and local authority partners are engaged in support for different communities</i> – <i>developing links with local faith communities and supplementary schools</i> – <i>understanding how pupils from all communities can access extended school provision</i> |
| – encouraging pupils as citizens to support the vulnerable and to use democratic and lawful vehicles for protest | – <i>modelling how pupils can express their views for example on media coverage of local or national issues, or through involvement with local decision making processes</i> |
| – respectful engagement with families and community groups which also, when necessary, challenges unacceptable views and models ways to solve problems | – <i>developing school and school partnership understanding of community issues and finding respectful ways to promote school values to local communities</i> |

School Action: evaluate and develop processes for community engagement by the school – especially with communities that may be vulnerable because of prejudice or where there are communication barriers

In contributing to the prevention of violent extremism, school leaders should work in **partnership** with other schools and colleges, the local authority and other agencies, including the police (through safer schools partnerships, safer neighbourhood teams or their equivalent):

- to understand local issues, share knowledge about support and prevention
- for specific teaching and learning activities and professional development strategies
- for individual case support, safeguarding, prevention programmes, family strategies, community safety and tension monitoring

School Action: evaluate school links with local partners and agencies and ensure contact points for advice and support are clearly identified

Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum

This section sets out how schools can contribute to preventing violent extremism through:

- ✓ a **curriculum** which is adapted to recognise local needs, challenge extremist narratives and promote human rights
- ✓ **teaching and learning strategies** which explore controversial issues in a way which promotes critical analysis and pro-social values
- ✓ the use of **external programmes or groups** to support learning while ensuring that the input supports the school goals and values

In using teaching, learning and the curriculum to build resilience to violent extremism, schools can build on what they already do to:

- help pupils to develop knowledge of religion, history, geography, citizenship, English (particularly the critical study of the media) and analyse current issues of concern
- help pupils to develop the skills needed to evaluate effectively and discuss potentially controversial issues
- provide safe spaces for pupils to discuss openly issues that concern them including exploring their own identities and how these relate to the diversity of the society in which they live
- provide opportunities for pupils to understand, meet and engage with people from different backgrounds in ways which promote the common values while recognising diversity within communities

Violent extremists use narratives that mix fact or selected fact with assertions, subjective opinion and emotion to justify their actions and promote violence. The narratives do not allow for alternative

interpretations and deny contradictory factual evidence or analysis. Violent extremism, and racial or hate-driven discrimination of all forms, also relies on sustaining and exaggerating divisions in society, often by exploiting people's fears or lack of understanding of others.

Education in a democracy should encourage each issue to be critically discussed and debated on its own merits with proper intellectual and ethical rigour. It should also promote the rights of citizens to lawful protest.

The curriculum

The core aims of the National Curriculum are to produce pupils who are:

- **responsible citizens** – which includes understanding identity, valuing diversity, working cooperatively to promote positive change
- **confident individuals** – which includes developing independence, self awareness and moral judgements
- **successful learners** – which includes developing enquiring minds, and engaging with the big issues of our world

Alongside the 14-19 curriculum, and whole curriculum elements such as SEAL, this provides many opportunities for work to build resilience to violent extremism.

i) Using and adapting the curriculum

Schools will already be familiar with adapting the curriculum in order to meet the needs of their pupils.

The role of religious education (RE), citizenship and history will be particularly critical in developing a stronger shared understanding of and respect for culture, belief and heritage, across all communities and dealing explicitly with aspects of violent extremist narratives. Opportunities to challenge myths and to discuss issues related to violent extremism may also arise in other lessons and in informal discussions in school with pupils or staff.

Tables highlighting the relevant **concepts, range and content, processes** and **curriculum opportunities** within the Key Stage 3 (KS3) programmes of study for citizenship, English, geography

history, PSHE and RE are available to download in the on-line toolkit. Similar themes are described on the QCA website for KS1, 2 and 4.

ii) Cross-curricular dimensions

Three cross-curricular dimensions can contribute particularly to preventing violent extremism:

- **media and technology** – becoming critical users of media messages
- **global dimension and sustainable development** – becoming global citizens
- **identity and cultural diversity** – becoming comfortable with self identity in a plural community

School Action: review and develop curriculum use and SEAL, drawing on available tools from the QCA and DCSF

iii) Developing relevant skills

The development of personal, learning and thinking skills supports pupils in resisting the messages of violent extremists, in particular the skills of independent enquiry and effective participation:

- **independent enquirers** – evaluating evidence to take reasoned decisions while recognising the beliefs of others
- **effective participators** – responsible participants to engage issues and help improve school and community

School Action: identify skills development needs and opportunities

Possible examples:

- a cross-school focus on developing critical skills in managing harmful media and internet information about particular communities
- a school theme to model how peaceful action has achieved results at local national or international levels

Lancashire schools in Burnley debate extremism

Year 10 students from two Burnley schools came together to debate the motion '**One man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist**', with the support of a local community group and the County Council. A six-week programme of research and discussion into controversial figures Osama Bin Laden, Martin McGuinness, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela culminated in a formal debate in the Council Chamber. Muslim and Christian students really enjoyed sharing views and beliefs in a safe and respectful environment.

Hira, from Sir John Thursby Community College, said: *"It went really well. It's not every day we get to meet with people from other schools and discuss big, big issues. It helps us to learn how things like parliament work and to see other people's points of view."*

Nicolo, from Blessed Trinity R.C. College, said: *"It was good to meet new people. I've always enjoyed arguing a point so it was good to be able to do it in this atmosphere."*

Rauf Bashir from 'Building Bridges Pendle' chaired the event. His organisation links people together from different races, religions and cultural backgrounds.

Chairman of the County Council, Alan Whittaker, observed: *'This is the world young people are living in. They hear about these issues every day and need to learn to discuss them while respecting each other's views. It was a brilliant debate. Our future is safe in the hands of these young people.'*

The schools plan to continue to work together on future projects as part of their citizenship curriculum.

Teaching and learning strategies

The Ajegbo report 'Identity and Diversity: A Curriculum Review' (DCSF 2007) highlighted that *'engaging pupils in sometimes controversial but deeply relevant issues will excite them, involve them, develop their thinking skills and both raise standards and make our country an even better place'*.

Effectively addressing controversial issues will also help to challenge misinformed views and perceptions amongst pupils, challenge commonly held 'myths' and build understanding and appreciation about others. This requires:

- questioning techniques to open up safe debate
- confidence to promote honesty about pluralist views
- ensuring both freedom of expression and freedom from threat
- debating fundamental moral and human rights principles
- promoting open respectful dialogue
- affirming the multiple dynamic identities we all have

School Action: review staff confidence in the core approaches to dealing with controversial issues and define professional development needs

Using external programmes and groups

Engaging with external speakers, programmes or groups can be an effective way of building awareness and skills of young people and encouraging debate. For example, theatre and drama productions are often a powerful stimulus for learning about controversial issues.

The **Khayaal Theatre Company's** production *'Hearts and minds'* is a production for schools and colleges which aims to encapsulate some of the dilemmas and discourses occupying the hearts and minds of young people, including issues of extremism. <http://www.khayaal.co.uk/>

The **GW Theatre Company** production *'One Extreme to the Other'*, aimed at young people aged 14-25, includes a comprehensive multi-media follow-up package including a website to inform further discussion and lead in good practice. <http://www.gwtheatre.com/>

Which criteria should schools use for selecting programmes or groups?

- What evidence is there to validate the approach used? This might be available from published evaluations, other schools or the local authority.

- Is the programme explicitly aligned with the values which the school promotes?
- Is it clear how the preparation, activity and follow-up (including evaluation) will take place to ensure effective learning?
- If using local groups to support learning around issues of politics, ethnicity or faith are the adults clear about the school expectations and, as needed, do they have CRB checks?
- What follow-up personal or learning support is available for individuals or groups as needed?

The Oxford Muslim Pupils' Empowerment Programme

Monawar Hussain, the Imam of Eton College, has designed an educational programme to engage Muslim school pupils through the creation of space within the school context dedicated to confidential discussion and debate of issues of concern to them. The programme, based in an Oxford secondary school, consists of a series of lunchtime forums at which pupils can explore subjects such as British foreign policy, Islamic History, Theology, Qur'ān and Hadith, Shari'ah and the questions revolving around identity and belonging. The aim throughout is for Muslim pupils to be equipped with a deeper understanding of the Islamic tradition, be able to recognise the complex nature of identity, to equip them with arguments against a violent extremist ideology and to develop the foundations for a British Islamic identity. Other pupils in the school are fully informed about the programme and work is now being developed with whole year groups. The programme is being extended to other local schools.

The on-line toolkit includes a more detailed description of the programme and sets out the questions young people have raised and the responses Monawar Hussain has formulated to stimulate discussion.

School Action: seek advice from other schools, local authorities or other sources to identify local groups to engage with schools

Links to further information, curriculum resources and examples of external organisations schools could engage with are set out at Annex 1. A more comprehensive set of links and examples are available in the on-line toolkit.

i – local information available

Pupil Support and Challenge

This section addresses how schools can support the welfare of individuals and groups of pupils through:

- ✓ using normal school pupil support approaches but, when relevant, being confident to seek further support
- ✓ using informed professional judgement to implement strategies in individual cases
- ✓ drawing on wider support from the community and other local partners to work with individuals or groups of pupils

Responsibilities

The professional standards for teachers, contractual and safeguarding frameworks for all adults working with children and young people, and the ECM outcomes for young people all require the exercise of a duty of care and, where necessary, the taking of actions for safeguarding and crime prevention. This includes challenging unacceptable behaviour such as racism or bullying that can impact on the wellbeing of individual or groups of pupils and supporting those who may be vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremist activity.

Understanding what is happening

The starting point for schools ensuring they are fulfilling their duty of care will be knowing their pupils and the wider community and listening and responding to their changing needs.

There are a number of signs or behaviours that school may come across that may cause staff concern and which would require them to use their professional judgement to determine whether a response is

needed. Staff will need to take into consideration how **reliable** or **significant** signs are and whether there are **other factors** or issues that could indicate vulnerability.

What school staff might see or hear about:

- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Pupils accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Partner schools, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools
- Pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence

Schools may wish to refer to the advice from the Quilliam Foundation (see page 19) included in the on-line toolkit

Challenge and support processes

Responses could be **in-school actions** (for example removing hate-related graffiti, challenging views expressed through classroom discussion or supporting pupils through normal pupil welfare strategies) or **involve external agencies** to ascertain whether there are other risk factors to be taken into account and determine an appropriate support plan.

It may be that a pupil is facing multiple challenges in their life, of which exposure to violent extremist influences is just one. The school should contribute to a multi-agency assessment where appropriate in line with the local authority protocols.

Schools may wish to identify a member of staff – this may be the child protection lead – who can act as a source of advice for others and lead on engaging with external partners.

School Action: review pupil support systems. Agree information sharing, support and challenge strategies locally with the multi-agency team

Recent examples of concerns that have arisen in schools

- A number of pupils bring into school far-right literature encouraging violence towards a local ethnic community given out by a group who were at the school gates and in the school car park the previous night.
- A primary age pupil in the playground starts talking about the ‘duty of all true Muslims to prepare for jihad war as we grow up’ and talks of the ‘7/7 martyrs’ with admiration.
- A supply teacher leaves a book in the school library which has a lengthy passage about martyrdom including a phrase ‘this indicates that seeking to be killed and pursuing martyrdom are legitimate and praiseworthy acts’.
- During a primary school circle time a number of pupils say that they have been involved in physical attacks on children outside school ‘to make them go back to their own country’.

Further examples, together with suggested school and partnership actions in response are included in the on-line toolkit to downloaded as a tool to review school practice.

Engaging targeted and specialist support for young people

Schools may identify a need for specific support programmes for individuals or groups of pupils such as mentoring, or access to experts who can provide guidance on issues of faith. These could be within the school or in partnership with others – for example school partnerships, local authority services, community partners, Youth Offending Teams, the police or other voluntary or statutory organisations.

***i* – local information available**

Barking and Dagenham project to support pupils at risk of joining far-right organisations

The project worked with 40 young male pupils with attitudes which could be characterised as inward-looking, having a strong geographical identity and holding racist views. Mentors were used to provide role models and to assist young male pupils develop positive responsible self-images.

Outcomes:

- a move away from extreme far-right views
- decrease in race/faith incidents
- reduction in youth crime
- improvement in community safety

Problem solving and repairing harm

Support to meet individual or group needs is often well developed within a school. Pupils also need to be helped to develop techniques for personal support, resolving conflict and repairing harm.

Helping pupils and adults access support

Pupils, parents and families, school staff and other professionals engaging with schools may need to have access to personal advice and understand who they can turn to for support in relation to preventing violent extremism issues.

School Action: review problem solving and personal support available for pupils, staff and parents

Managing Risk and Responding to Events

This section helps schools:

- ✓ to ensure they are aware of and managing potential risks to pupils and the wider school community effectively
- ✓ to respond to events which could have an impact on the school community

Managing Risks

Although there are very few instances of young people being exposed to violent extremist messages *within* schools, this is a risk of which schools need to be aware. Risks could arise from:

- harmful influences on pupils – for example from governors, staff, parents, external groups or other pupils
- inappropriate use of ICT systems
- external groups using school premises

Examples of legal and contractual powers that may be relevant to preventing violent extremism are set out at Annex 2. Extracts from relevant counter-terrorism, equalities and human rights legislation are included in the on-line toolkit.

Harmful influences on pupils

School governors and staff may express views, bring material into the school, use or direct pupils to extremist websites, or act in other ways to promote violent extremist views. Their actions may constitute a breach of the relevant professional standards or may be illegal. In such an event they should be subject to the relevant disciplinary procedures and, as appropriate, schools should ensure that issues are referred to the local authority and police. The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) from 2009 (currently the Vetting and Barring scheme) may also need to be informed.

Schools should review:

- whether the school's recruitment and induction arrangements (including for governors) make explicit the role of all staff and governors in keeping pupils safe from harm
- that it is operating in accordance with the relevant regulations for the conduct and vetting of staff, including CRB checks, General Teaching Council registration and referral and, from 2009, ISA registration
- whether effective arrangements are in place for monitoring and reporting racist incidents, prejudice-related bullying and hate crime

School Action: review relevant school personnel policies and processes

Accessing inappropriate content through the use of ICT

Websites and social networking sites are important vehicles for violent extremists to promote their message and to encourage engagement.

Schools should do all that they can to promote effective and responsible use of ICT and to prevent staff or pupils from accessing illegal or inappropriate material through school ICT systems, including having appropriate monitoring systems in place with recourse to police and other partners as necessary.

School Action: review the ICT policy and practice to:

- ensure that hardware and software systems used in the school are accredited through **Becta's accreditation schemes** (www.schools.becta.org.uk/esafety). These require providers to block illegal content and at least 90% of inappropriate content. The definition of illegal content Becta uses includes racist and hate material, and material that promotes violence or attack on individuals or institutions on the basis of religious, racial or gender grounds
- review the **Acceptable Use Policy** of the school for pupils and staff to ensure that use of material related to violent extremism is prohibited; and ensure pupils, staff and governors are clear on the policy, monitoring practices and the sanctions
- ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of the issues regarding risk and **responsible use** and are discerning and discriminating consumers of on-line information

External groups using school premises or facilities

There have been examples of groups linked to violent extremism trying to use school premises for campaigning or other events. Schools should be aware of this risk and ensure that the school or local authority lettings policy sets out values of the school and makes clear that any group whose aims are counter to those values may not hire the facility.

It is recommended that schools liaise early with the local authorities or police to check the bona fides of groups if they have any concerns. This will then allow time for sensitive handling of particular applications for use of school premises.

School Action: review the school and local authority lettings policy and ensure that staff managing school lettings know where to seek advice

Responding to events

Violent extremism is unlikely to affect most schools directly. However some schools and their communities have been affected by:

- national incidents such as the 7/7 bombings (which had a particular impact on schools in London and Leeds)
- international politics linked to and events such as the invasion of Iraq, the situation in Afghanistan, Somalia or other scenes of conflict
- domestic political events in other countries relevant to particular diaspora communities within the UK
- local counter terrorism operations and related community tensions
- media reports on political or faith groups which are seen as biased
- high profile trials of those accused of terrorist related offences

Schools need to understand their communities to be aware of what may impact on pupils and be prepared to respond.

Events in the local, national or international news

In the aftermath of an event or an incident schools may choose to undertake whole school, year group or class-based sessions to promote opportunities for informed discussion including:

- getting the facts clear – evidence versus rumour
- understanding motivations
- promoting human rights and legal protection – freedom of speech and due process to raise grievances

Schools should also ensure personal support is in place for staff and pupils most affected by incidents.

Local authority and partner services may be drawn on for:

- advice, briefings or support from police or other agencies
- educational psychology service support for school leaders in responding to incidents
- individual pupil case work
- corporate services for media management
- human resources support for staff issues

School Action: review the school emergency plan including post-event actions to ensure appropriate processes for supporting pupils and staff are incorporated

ANNEX 1

Further information and resources

Information relating to extremism issues

Anti-defamation League

Information on graphic and numerical symbols used by far-right groups.

www.adl.org/hate_symbols/Unsere.asp

Educating Against Extremism – Lynn Davies, Trentham Books, 2008

Looks at the processes that can lead individuals to extreme beliefs or the use of violence and suggests ways in which education can help.

Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)

The 'knowledge' section of the IDeA website provides policy updates, information, useful links and resources on preventing violent extremism.

www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=7890410

Security Service

Information on the radicalisation process and extremist groups, including Al Qaida.

www.mi5.gov.uk/output/Page19.html

Teaching, learning and the curriculum links

1001 Inventions

A resource that looks at the heritage which the Muslim community share with other communities in the UK, Europe and across the World.

www.1001inventions.com

Adapting the curriculum – QCA

<http://curriculum.qca.org.uk>

Defeating Organised Racial Hatred – Commission for Racial Equality

Information to challenge common myths about people from minority groups.

www.equalityhumanrights.com/Documents/Race/Employment/Defeating_organised_racial_hatred.pdf

Diversity and Dialogue

An online directory of projects and resources aimed at bringing young people from different faiths and backgrounds together.

www.diversityanddialogue.org.uk

Global Citizenship Guides: Teaching Controversial Issues – Oxfam

Strategies and activities to help teachers address controversial issues.

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/teachersupport/cpd/controversial

Global Dimension – DEA

A guide to resources which support global and intercultural understanding.

www.globaldimension.org.uk

The Holocaust Centre and Holocaust Educational Trust

Outreach programmes and teaching materials to educate young people about the Holocaust and lessons to be learned on combating prejudice and racism.

www.holocaustcentre.net and www.het.org.uk/content.php

Racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia – Teachernet

Links to a variety of resources to support the school workforce in tackling issues of racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/racistbullying/developing/racismantisemitism

Radical Middle Way

Information, resources and events aimed at articulating a relevant mainstream understanding of Islam that is proactive and relevant to young British Muslims.

www.radicalmiddleway.co.uk

Respect For All – QCA

A range of whole school and subject related guidance and resources on valuing diversity and challenging racism through the curriculum.

www.qca.org.uk/qca_6753.aspx

Schools Linking Network

A website that allows schools to seek a linking partner online, with support.

www.schoolslinkingnetwork.org.uk

Teaching about controversial issues – Teachernet

Guidelines for handling controversial issues, both in the classroom and in informal conversations with pupils, drawing on recent publications in this area.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/racistbullying/preventing/controversialissues

Watch Over Me – Miss Dorothy.com

Web presence and teaching materials designed to help children handle risk. Copies of the 'Watch Over Me' DVD resources are available free to schools, enquiries should be addressed to

office@thekidstaskforce.com.

www.missdorothy.com

A more comprehensive list of resources is available in the on-line toolkit.

Annex 2:

Legal and contractual powers

| Issue | Legal and contractual powers |
|-------------------------|---|
| Staff conduct | <p>The GTC statement of professional values and practice for teachers includes the statement that:</p> <p>'Within [the legal] framework [teachers] place particular importance on promoting equality of opportunity – challenging stereotypes, opposing prejudice, and respecting individuals regardless of age, gender, disability, colour, race, ethnicity, class, religion, marital status or sexual orientations'.</p> <p>Section 406 of the Education Act 1996 provides that the local authority, governing body and head teacher of a maintained school must forbid the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school. Section 407 provides that the local authority, governing body and head teacher of a maintained school must take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.</p> <p>Any action in breach of legislation or the GTC standards should trigger relevant disciplinary procedures.</p> |
| School behaviour policy | <p>In setting a school behaviour policy, governors, working with the head, staff and pupils, can set a framework which supports the leadership values recommended in this toolkit.</p> |

| Issue | Legal and contractual powers |
|---|--|
| Searching for and confiscation of inappropriate items | <p>Under the 2006 Violent Crime Reduction Act schools have powers to search a pupil without consent for:</p> <p>(a) an article to which section 139 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 applies (knives and blades etc.), or</p> <p>(b) an offensive weapon (within the meaning of the Prevention of Crime Act 1953).</p> <p>Section 550AA of the Education Act 1996 states that items obtained should be passed onto a police constable who may retain or dispose of them.</p> <p>Specific guidance on searching pupils for weapons is available (www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=11454).</p> <p>Schools can also use common law powers of confiscation under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 for any item including clothing, signs or colours. Section 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that where an item which a pupil has with him or in his possessions is seized, and the item is retained for any period or is disposed of as a disciplinary penalty, the person who seizes, retains or disposes of the item is not liable in any proceedings provided the confiscation is lawful (www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/schooldisciplinepupilbehaviourpolicies/nonstatguidanceforheadsandstaff/confiscation/).</p> |
| Enforcement of uniform code | <p>Schools are able to ban items of clothing against school uniform rules. Case law shows that these rules must be established sensitively in consultation with partners in the local authority and community or it becomes a grievance in itself.</p> |

| Issue | Legal and contractual powers |
|--|--|
| An individual or group intruding on school premises to promote leaflets or activities against the wishes of the head teacher | Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 provides that any person who without lawful authority is present on premises to which this section applies and causes or permits nuisance or disturbance to the annoyance of persons who lawfully use those premises (whether or not any such persons are present at the time) is guilty of an offence (www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthandsafety/schoolsecurity/). |
| Preventing use of violent extremist websites | The school can require pupils and staff to abide by Acceptable User Policies which make clear that accessing such sites is unacceptable. Using school computers to email violent extremist publications to others would be a criminal offence. |

Extracts from the legislation relating to terrorism, equalities and human rights are included in the on-line toolkit.



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