

Prevent: Tackling Violent Extremism

Little Acorns School



Growth Learning Therapies

Approved by:	Chair of the board	Date: July 2022
Last reviewed on:	August 2025	
Next review due by:	August 2027	



Little Acorns School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. As a school we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerable group. All staff are expected to uphold fundamental British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Although incidents involving radicalisation have not occurred at Little Acorns to date, it is important to be constantly vigilant and remain fully informed about issues surrounding this.

This policy establishes formal procedures to enable members of the Company and its Service Users to report concerns they may have about activities or behaviour related to violent extremism.

This policy is part of our commitment to keeping children safe. Since the 'Education and Inspections Act 2006' schools have a duty to promote community cohesion. Over the last few years global events have led to a growth of extremist viewpoints, including advocacy of violent extremism. Schools have an important part to play in both educating children and young people about extremism and recognising when pupils start to become radicalised. In March 2015 new statutory duties were placed on schools by the 'Counter Terrorism and Security Act,' (2015) which means they must work to prevent children being drawn into extremism. Safeguarding children from all risks of harm is an important part of a school's work and protecting them from extremism is one aspect of that.

Statutory Duties

The duty to prevent children and young people being radicalised is set out in the following documents.

- Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Prevent Duty Guidance (April 2024)
- Working together to Safeguard Children (2023)

Non-statutory Guidance

- Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools: Departmental advice for maintained schools, (DfE 2014).

1. Aims and Objectives:

The main aims of this policy are to ensure that all staff are fully engaged in being vigilant about radicalisation; that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues will not arise at our school and that we work alongside the care setting and other care professionals to ensure all children are safe. The key objectives are that:

- All staff will have an understanding of radicalisation and extremism and why we need to be vigilant.
- All staff know what the policy is and will be able to follow it when issues arise.
- All carers and pupils will know that the school has policies in place to keep pupils safe from harm and that the school regularly review these systems in place.



2. Definition and Introduction

- Radicalisation is defined as the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist activity.
- Extremism is defined as The promotion or advancement of an ideology based on intolerance, hatred or violence that opposes or undermines democracy, individual rights, the rule of law, or mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremism can create environments conducive to terrorism.
- Terrorism is defined in the Terrorism Act 2000: the use or threat of action designed to influence the government or intimidate the public, made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause, and involving serious violence, damage to property, endangering life, or creating a serious risk to public safety.

The UK faces a range of terrorism and extremist threats, including Islamist terrorism, Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism (ERWT), and other motivated terrorism. Threats can come from individuals in the UK or abroad, and extremist groups may promote violence or target communities, sometimes recruiting young people or encouraging harmful behaviours.

Our school is committed to the **Government's Prevent strategy**, which forms part of the wider counter-terrorism framework. Prevent aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting extremist activity. Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, all schools are **specified authorities** and must give **due regard** to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This duty is integrated into our safeguarding responsibilities and daily practices.

The objectives of Prevent in education are:

1. **Tackling extremist ideologies** – challenging narratives that justify violence and promoting positive, mainstream values.
2. **Early intervention** – identifying and supporting students or staff who may be vulnerable to radicalisation.
3. **Disengagement and rehabilitation** – helping individuals move away from extremist ideologies or activity.

To achieve these objectives, our school will:

- Foster a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where students feel valued and respected.
- Educate students to critically evaluate extremist narratives and develop resilience to harmful ideologies.
- Work with parents, local communities, and partner agencies to provide guidance and support.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate Prevent training and understand their responsibilities for safeguarding and reporting concerns.



- Follow up-to-date guidance from the Home Office and MI5 regarding proscribed organisations and current threats.

The path to violent extremism

Radicalisation is the process by which a young person may become susceptible to extremist ideology that could, in some cases, lead to engagement in terrorism or extremist activity. This process is **not linear or predictable** and can vary in duration from weeks to years. It does not always result in violent behaviour.

Early indicators and pathways:

- The secondary school period is often when young people begin exploring identity, belonging, and purpose, making them potentially more vulnerable to extremist influence.
- Radicalisation is frequently influenced by social networks, including peers, family members, or wider community contacts. Initial exposure can occur in both supervised and unsupervised settings, including online environments, social media, and community spaces.
- Extremist ideologies often attract young people through persuasive narratives, which can reinforce beliefs, justify violence, or offer a sense of purpose or belonging.

Factors that may increase a young person's vulnerability to extremist influence:

There is no single profile of a person likely to become radicalised. However, potential contributing factors include:

- Questions about identity, faith, or belonging.
- A desire for adventure, excitement, or personal significance.
- Influence of charismatic individuals or attraction to groups offering social networks and support.
- Experiences of personal crisis, family tension, or social isolation.
- Exposure to discrimination, marginalisation, or conflict—locally or linked to migration or international events.
- Limited educational achievement or perceived barriers to future career and life opportunities.
- Previous involvement in group offending, anti-social behaviour, or links to criminal activity.
- Other contributing factors may include ideological or political motivations, fascination with conflict or weapons, the search for status, or the need for social connection and identity.

School responsibilities:

Schools have a statutory duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to **give due regard** to the need to prevent students from being drawn into terrorism. Staff should be aware of potential vulnerabilities, foster resilience, and provide timely support to students at risk. The focus is on safeguarding, early intervention, and promoting **British values**—including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect for different faiths and beliefs—while addressing extremist narratives in age-appropriate ways.



3. Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures • making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programs and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent)
- secretive behaviour
- online searching or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

4. Referrals

Although Little Acorns has not experienced incidents of radicalisation to date, staff must remain vigilant and informed about the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation. Staff should not assume that such issues “could not happen here” and must follow established safeguarding procedures if concerns arise. Regular training and refresher sessions—through staff meetings, safeguarding training, and online courses—ensure that all staff are confident in identifying and referring concerns.

Early intervention is essential. Staff must be aware of the processes for referring concerns about individuals or groups. They should have the confidence to challenge, the confidence to intervene, and ensure strong safeguarding practices in line with the most up-to-date guidance and best practice.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Joanna Curley, and the Deputy DSLs, Graham Richards, Ruth Palmer and Tegan McGill, will respond promptly to any concerns raised by staff. The DSL team will assess each situation, determine the appropriate course of action, and decide when a referral to external agencies (such as the local authority or the police) is required.

All concerns and actions will be recorded and maintained on CPOMS, including a clear chronology of events.

5. Role of the Curriculum

Our curriculum actively promotes diversity, tolerance, and mutual respect, preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Children are encouraged to share their views and recognise that they are entitled to hold different beliefs, but these beliefs must not be used to influence or harm others.



PSHE and SMSC education is embedded across the curriculum, including teaching British values alongside the school's core values. Students are supported to contribute positively to a fair, just, and civil society.

Online safety is a key focus, ensuring children know how to stay safe online. It is strictly prohibited to use the school's IT systems for promoting, planning, or engaging in extremist activity. The school reserves the right to monitor IT systems and electronic communications to ensure compliance with these rules.

6. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL team is responsible for:

- Ensuring staff understand radicalisation and extremism, can recognise vulnerabilities, and know how to report concerns.
- Receiving and managing safeguarding concerns about pupils who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or showing signs of extremist behaviour.
- Making timely referrals to appropriate agencies where necessary.
- Liaising with external partners, including the local authority and the police.
- Reporting to the governing body on safeguarding matters related to radicalisation and extremism.

7. Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff are expected to:

- Challenge racist, extremist, or intolerant views or behaviours whenever possible—whether this involves removing hate-related graffiti, responding to inappropriate comments in discussion, or supporting pupils through restorative practices.
- Record minor incidents in CPOMS.
- Report major concerns in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. If there are indications that a pupil may be vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist influence, staff must follow the standard safeguarding referral process.
- Make immediate verbal reports to the Headteacher or DSL. If concerns arise outside school hours, staff should report by telephone.
- Ensure that all reports reflect the child's own words, avoiding interpretation or summarisation by staff.

Little Acorns DSL is:



Joanna Curley - joanna.curley@littleacornstc.com

Deputy DSL's are:

Graham Richards - graham.richards@littleacornstc.com

Ruth Palmer - ruth.palmer@littleacornstc.com

Tegan McGill - Tegan.mcgill@littleacornstc.com

8. Policy Review:

This policy is reviewed at least every two years or sooner if necessary, in the light of specific events or relevant statutory changes.

