British Values and the Prevent Duty

Who is this aimed at?

Anybody who works within the children and young people service network needs to have a good understanding of what is meant by the term 'British Values' and the meaning of the 'Prevent Duty' and to be able to promote this as part of supporting children and young people. This includes support teams, managers of teams, staff training department and vocational education or qualification providers.

What are 'British Values'?

This is a difficult term to identify as everybody will have their own interpretation of this term and will define this in a different way. The UK Government has identified some key elements which define British Values as;

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

As professionals working with children and young people, managers of those teams or as training and education providers, we all have a duty to ensure that we are working to highlight British Values as defined by the UK Government through supporting people to;

- Develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
- Accept responsibility for their own behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in our society
- Acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
- Promote tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions and acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures

Whilst promoting these values we should make sure that we;

- Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
- Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England
- Prevent the promotion of partisan political views
- Ensure that where political issues are discussed that they offer a balanced view of opposing views

What is the Prevent Duty?

The Prevent Duty is now included in statutory guidance to everybody working with children and young people and also in safeguarding guidance (the Prevent Duty is now included in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children').

The Prevent Duty is an essential part of safeguarding children and young people and anybody who is working with children and young people must have a clear understanding of what radicalisation is and be able to;

- Identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation
- Know what to do when they are identified
- Understand the risks and be able to make a risk assessment of the risks to any child or young person
- Know how to protect and safeguard children from radicalisation

The aims of this is to support children and young people to understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.
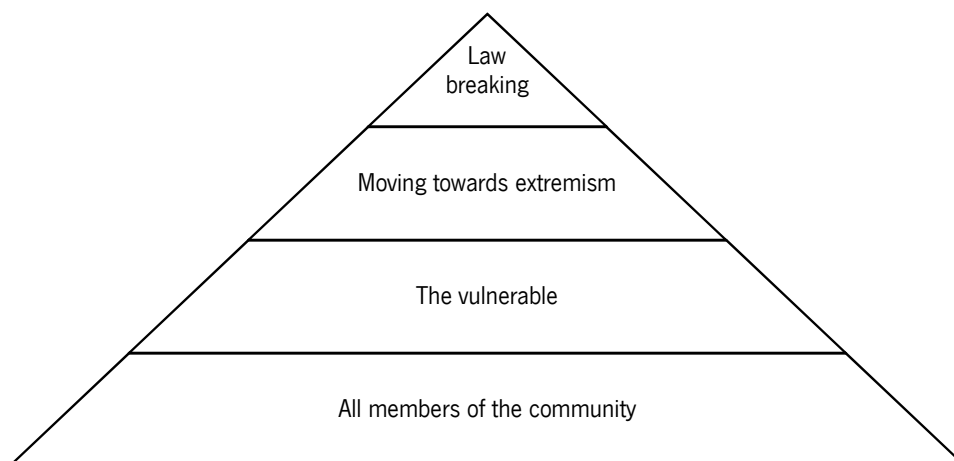
What is Radicalisation?
As its definitions indicate, radicalisation is best viewed as a process of change, a personal and political transformation from one condition to another. Recent scholars argue that becoming radicalised is, for most people, a gradual process and one that requires a progression through distinct stages and happens neither quickly nor easily (Horgan, 2005; Sibler and Bhatt, 2007).

So a person does not become radical overnight, although the influence of an incident which may act as a 'catalyst event' (such as an experienced act of discrimination, perceived attack on Islam such as the 2003 war on Iraq, or a 'moral crisis' with the death of a loved one) may accelerate the process.

The 'Prevent Pyramid' Model of Radicalisation
One way of conceiving radicalisation is as a progressive movement up a pyramidal-type model, where higher levels in the pyramid are associated with increased levels of radicalisation but decreased numbers of those involved (see below chart);

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              /\
             /  \
            / Law \
           /breaking\
          /----------\
         /   Moving   \
        / towards      \
       /  extremism     \
      /------------------\
     /   The vulnerable   \
    /----------------------\
   /  All members of the    \
  /       community          \
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Influences of Radicalisation
A large amount of material which is aimed at promoting the radicalisation of young people is available on the internet and through social media sources and supporters need to be aware of the risks involved with this and to have a procedure in place to reasonably monitor the use of these websites if any concerns begin to

be raised. A major concern is that the level of extreme violence used in this material can lead to the 'normalisation' of this behaviour for young people. There are some important considerations that everybody who is working with children and young people need to be aware of in relation to redicalisation;

- Some radicalisation takes place in the family and professionals need to be aware of signs that this may be happening and put safeguards into place

- Professionals need to be aware of where young people are spending their free time and who they are spending it with as radicalisation may take place in friendship groups or other formal and informal meeting places. Support teams are entitled to continue to ask young people where they are going, who they are with, what they are doing and when they will be returning. This has long been good practice in supporting children and safeguarding young people and has an extra 'value' in situations where the risk of radicalisation is of concern.

- As with all dangers the best way to protect children is to introduce the subject at an early stage, to provide balanced discussion material and to talk about the issues and discuss the issues informally

Indicators of vulnerable young people and risks of radicalisation

There are some general indicators of vulnerable young people and although these can relate to many different aspects of a young person's life and their experiences, it is important to remember that the level of vulnerability and flexible influence which some young people have can lead them to becoming a principle target for radicalisation groups. Vulnerability indicators to consider include;

Feeling a loss of their own identity
- The person is distanced from their cultural or religious heritage and experiences
- There may be family tensions or separation causing the person to feel isolated and alone
- They may be experiencing low self-esteem which can increase their risk as a 'target'
- The person may have separated from their known and existing friendship group and have become involved with a new and different group of friends with increased secrecy about who they are
- The person may be asking an increased number of questions about identity, faith and belonging

The effects of personal circumstances
- The person could have experienced migration or immigration
- There could be community pressure and tensions amongst different cultures
- They could have personal experiences of conflict in their country of origin and link this to UK Government interventions
- The person may have perceptions of injustice, a feeling of failure or rejection of cultural acceptance

Experiences of crime
- The person could have involvement with criminal groups
- The person could have experienced imprisonment followed by difficulty with resettlement and reintegration on their release

The effects of special educational needs
- The young person may have additional learning requirements or a learning disability
- The person may have challenges with social interaction, behaviour and empathy with others
- They may have difficulty understanding the consequences of their own actions and the principle of cause and effect

Serious risk factors

In additional to the above indictors of vulnerability, there are also additional serious risk factors which everybody who is working with children and young people need to be aware of and to know how to respond to including;

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Accessing violent extremist websites with a social networking pathway
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist material and books
- Using extremist terms to explain their feeling of disadvantage and being 'let down'
- Justifying the use of violence in society
- Joining or trying to join extremist organisations

All concerns about radicalisation and extremism should be referred to the designated safeguarding officer in your own organisation who will assess the risk and refer the matter on to the Local Children's Safeguarding Board duty officer or to the police in more serious situations that may require an immediate response.

In addition, schools have an important role to play in equipping children and young people to stay safe online, both in school and outside. Internet safety will usually be integral to a school's ICT curriculum and can also be embedded in PSHE. Residential services and children's support services also have a duty to education children and young people in the safe use of the internet and to also have reasonable monitoring procedures in place.

Principles of Democracy

It is important that everybody supporting children and young people are able to identify the principles of democracy which can include;

- Understanding how government and local government operate
- How the laws are agreed and set
- How different groups can put pressure on those in power (public pressure, trade unions etc.)
- How democratic principles might apply in the workplace and in child care

Promoting the rule of law

Everybody working with children and young people need to be able to promote the law as it relates to us as individuals which include promoting an understanding of;

- Criminal law
- Civil law
- Rights legislation
- Discrimination law
- Health and safety law
- Law pertaining to child care and safeguarding
- Employment law

What is individual liberty?

Individual liberty relates to the freedoms and choices we all have in all areas of life and the choices we all have about work, leisure, family life, religion, etc. It is important that this principle is reflected in the work which takes place when supporting children and young people to become aware of their rights and responsibilities as they work to become adolescent young people and young adults.

The 'Channel Programme'

Children and young people services, including residential support, schools and further education providers should be able to recognise when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a way for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. Guidance of the Channel Programme is available from the UK Government website.

Key thoughts

Safeguarding children and young people from radicalisation is a safeguarding issues and everybody working with children and young people need to be aware of their duty of care and organisation requirements to promote, monitor and manage situations.

In the same was as monitoring any other safeguarding concern, support teams need to be aware of any noticeable changes to a child or young person behaviour which may cause concern and raise a need for further safeguarding and protection.

Clear procedures need to be in place for protecting children, including the protection of children and young people from radicalisation and although services do not need to necessarily have separate policies for implementing the 'prevent duty', it does need to be integrated into existing safeguarding procedures.

All services and supporters need to focus on the common objective to build a child or young person's resilience to the impact and effects of radicalisation by ensuring that there is a safe environment for discussing potentially controversial issues and supporting people to understand how they are involved in and responsible for the decisions they make.

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