



Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

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Last reviewed on:	October 2026	October 2026
Next review due by:	October 2027	October 2027
Approved by:		Date:

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1. Introduction

Sharples School is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils, where pupils feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at Sharples School recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for pupils or not.

2. Aims

To ensure that all staff and governors are vigilant for the signs of radicalisation; that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues 'will not happen here' and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our children are safe from harm.

All governors, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism are and why we need to be vigilant in school.

All governors, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on anti-radicalisation and extremism and will follow the policy when issues arise.

Sharples will ensure this policy is available to the wider community through its website and in hard copy from the school reception on request.

3. Legislation

Adhering to this policy and the procedures therein forms part of our school's commitment to keeping children safe.

Since the '[Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)', schools have a duty to promote 'community cohesion'. Over the recent years, global events have led to a growth in extremist viewpoints, including advocacy of violent extremism.

Section 26 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) requires schools to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The [Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales \(2023\)](#), issued by the Home Office, came into force on 31 December 2023. Prevent aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

This policy is informed by the [Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales \(2023\)](#), [Keeping children safe in education 2026](#), current [DfE guidance on making a Prevent referral](#), and Bolton's published safeguarding and Prevent procedures.

4. Definitions

As stated in the [Prevent duty](#) guidance:

Radicalisation – the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Extremism – for the purposes of this safeguarding policy, extremist narratives and influences that may legitimise terrorism or draw people into supporting terrorist violence. Prejudice, hatred and discrimination will also be addressed through the school's wider safeguarding and behaviour procedures. Offensive views alone do not automatically establish a Prevent concern.

British Values- democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

5. Indicators of vulnerability

There are no known definitive indicators that a young person is vulnerable to radicalisation, but there are a number of signs that together increase the risk. These include:

- Life stage transition or major life change
- Mental health issues, stress or depression
- Peer or family pressure
- Influenced by other people or via the internet
- Victim of bullying or discrimination
- Being a victim or perpetrator of crime, anti-social behaviour or hate crime
- Family tensions
- Lack of self-esteem or identity, isolated or lonely
- Personal or political grievances
- Financial and other worries

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

6. Indicators that someone is being radicalised

It is very difficult to know at what stage certain views can become dangerous, or if someone is being exploited and manipulated into becoming a part of an extremist group. Signs aren't always obvious, but indicators that someone is being radicalised may include:

- Withdrawal from family and friends or changing circle of friends
- Displaying feelings of isolation, depression or losing interest in activities they used to enjoy
- Questioning their own identity or beliefs
- Hostility towards others, talking as if from a script, being unwilling to discuss their views
- Increased levels of anger
- Being secretive, particularly around what they are doing on the internet
- Using extremist terms to exclude people or incite violence 'us and them' thinking
- Supporting violence and terrorism towards other cultures, nationalities, or religions
- Possession of extremist literature or other material, or trying to access extremist websites
- Possession of any material about weapons, explosives, or military training

These signs don't necessarily mean that someone is being radicalised. Sometimes this can be normal behaviour, particularly for teenagers or an indicator that something else is going on.

7. School Ethos and Practice

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources - students, staff or governors, or external sources - school community, external agencies or individuals. Our students see our school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens.

As a school we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for students and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this policy. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our students.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of young people. Education is a powerful weapon against this; equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way.

Therefore, at Sharples School we will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our students are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalized.

Furthermore at Sharples School we are aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which emanate from a variety of sources and media, including via the internet, and at times pupils may themselves reflect or display views that may be discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by students or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy for students and the Code of Conduct for staff.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities school staff will be alert to:

- Disclosures by pupils of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where students have not actively sought these out
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Students accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Local authority services and police reports of issues affecting students in other academies, schools or settings
- Students voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Concerns suggesting support for, encouragement of or preparation for terrorist violence, assessed in context rather than by political criticism or religious beliefs alone

Our school will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership agreed processes and criteria for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

Assessment will be individual and proportionate. Religion, ethnicity, disability, mental health needs, lawful protest, political criticism or questioning identity are not, by themselves, evidence of radicalisation. Staff will consider the whole context, any pattern of behaviour and possible connections to terrorism, while responding to other safeguarding needs.

The school's Prevent risk assessment identifies national and local risks, including Islamist and extreme right-wing terrorism, online radicalisation and mixed or unclear ideological influences. The DSL will use current advice from Bolton and police partners to review these risks and avoid assumptions about individual pupils or communities. Lawful discussion and debate will be supported, with appropriate challenge to hatred and encouragement of violence.

Online safety forms part of Prevent safeguarding. The DSL, senior leaders and IT staff will maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring, with clear responsibilities for checking systems and responding to alerts. Alerts indicating safeguarding concerns will be passed promptly to the DSL and recorded and followed up. Provision will be reviewed at least annually and when significant risks or technology change, in line with [DfE filtering and monitoring standards](#). Pupils will be taught digital literacy, how online manipulation and extremist recruitment operate and how to seek help.

8. Teaching Approaches

We will all strive to eradicate the myths and assumptions that can lead to some young people becoming alienated and disempowered, especially where the narrow approaches students may experience elsewhere may make it harder for them to challenge or question these radical influences. In our school this will be achieved by good teaching in form time, PSHE and curriculum subjects as well in assembly time.

We will ensure that all of our teaching approaches help our students build resilience to extremism and give students a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills.

We will ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it.

We will be flexible enough to adapt our teaching approaches, as appropriate, so as to address specific issues so as to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation. In doing so we will apply the methodologies following the three broad categories of:

- Making a connection with young people through good [teaching] design and a student centred approach;
- Facilitating a 'safe space' for dialogue; and

- Equipping our students with the appropriate skills, knowledge, understanding and awareness for resilience

This approach will be embedded within the school's ethos, curriculum and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils will be supported to reflect on their beliefs, understand different perspectives, respect diversity and discuss controversial issues safely.

Our goal is to build mutual respect and understanding and to promote the use of dialogue not violence as a form of conflict resolution. We will achieve this by using a curriculum that includes:

- Citizenship programmes
- Open discussion and debate
- Work on anti-violence and a restorative approach addressed throughout the curriculum and the behaviour policy
- Focussed educational programmes

We will also work with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to ensure our school understands and embraces our local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our student's experiences and horizons. We will help support students who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a student is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences we will ensure that that student is offered mentoring. Additionally in such instances our school will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

At Sharples we expect our pupils to understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity. This is shown by their respect and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities. We will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We will teach and encourage students to respect one another and to respect and tolerate differences, especially those of a different faith or no faith. It is indeed our most fundamental responsibility to keep our students safe and prepare them for life in modern multicultural Britain and globally.

9. Use of External Agencies and Speakers

At Sharples School we encourage the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our students, however we will positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences for our students.

Such vetting is to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages or that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the school's values and ethos. We must be aware that in some instances the work of external agencies may not directly be connected with the rest of the school curriculum so we need to ensure that this work is of benefit to students.

Our school will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- Any messages communicated to students are consistent with the ethos of the school and do not marginalise any communities, groups or individuals
- Any messages do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism or seek to radicalise students through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies.
- Activities are properly embedded in the curriculum and clearly mapped to schemes of work to avoid contradictory messages or duplication.
- Activities are matched to the needs of students.
- Activities are carefully evaluated by the school to ensure that they are effective.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school is to encourage students to understand opposing views and ideologies, appropriate to their age, understanding and abilities, and to be able to actively engage with them in informed debate, and we may use external agencies or speakers to facilitate and support this.

Therefore by delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, we will strive to ensure our students recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help students develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

External speakers and organisations must receive prior approval from an appropriate senior leader. Checks will consider their identity, relevant background, proposed content, materials and online presence, with a proportionate recorded risk assessment. Staff will supervise sessions, challenge inappropriate content and stop an activity if necessary. Teaching and speaker arrangements will comply with political impartiality duties and the balanced presentation of political issues.

The same safeguards apply to lettings and third-party use of school facilities or IT. Due diligence, conditions of use and supervision arrangements will prevent facilities being used to promote terrorist narratives or radicalise others. The school may refuse or end use where safeguarding concerns arise.

10. Reporting concerns and whistleblowing

Staff must report any concern about susceptibility to radicalisation promptly to C.Wood, Deputy Headteacher and DSL, or an available deputy DSL, and record factual information on Bromcom in line with safeguarding procedures. An urgent concern must be communicated directly; recording alone is not sufficient. Staff should record the pupil's words, relevant behaviour, context, dates and action taken, and should not investigate independently or promise confidentiality.

If there is immediate danger to a person or an immediate threat to public safety, call 999 and notify the DSL or Headteacher as soon as possible. If the DSL is unavailable, contact an available deputy DSL or the Headteacher. Staff must not delay necessary safeguarding action and may contact Children's Social Care or police directly where required, recording and informing the DSL of action taken.

The DSL will use the Notice, Check, Share approach: consider the concern in context, check relevant information and seek advice where needed, then make a timely referral where there is concern about radicalisation into terrorism. The school will use the current Prevent referral form linked from [Bolton Council's referral page](#), ensuring it reflects the national referral requirements, and send it securely to channel.project@gmp.police.uk in accordance with the published local process.

For advice, contact the Prevent police team at channel.project@gmp.police.uk or 0161 856 6362. Local Prevent advice is available from community.safety.services@bolton.gov.uk. Families may also use [government radicalisation-support advice](#) or call the national police Prevent advice line on 0800 011 3764. These advice routes do not replace emergency action.

The DSL will record the rationale for referral or other action, information shared, advice received, acknowledgement and follow-up. If a referral is not acknowledged within one working day, the DSL will contact the receiving agency. School support, risk assessment and monitoring will continue while the concern is considered and after any referral outcome.

The DSL will normally involve the pupil and parents or carers, explaining the safeguarding purpose. Advice will be sought before doing so where this could increase risk or prejudice safeguarding or police action. Information may be shared without consent where there is an appropriate lawful basis and this is necessary and proportionate to safeguard the child or others; reasons will be recorded.

Channel is a voluntary, multi-agency programme. Consent from the person, or the parent or legal guardian for a child under 18 as appropriate, is required before Channel support is provided. Consent for Channel support is distinct from making a referral or lawful safeguarding information sharing. The school will cooperate with Channel partners, contribute relevant information and implement agreed support. Where Channel is unsuitable or declined, appropriate alternative safeguarding support will be considered with partners.

Prevent and Channel records will be held securely within safeguarding records, accessed on a need-to-know basis and transferred securely to the receiving school or college within the child protection file when a pupil moves.

Concerns about staff conduct or failures in school practice must also be raised through the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, allegations procedures and Whistleblowing Policy. Pupil radicalisation concerns must follow the safeguarding reporting route above.

11. Child Protection

Please refer to the Sharples School Safeguarding Policy for the full procedural framework on our Child Protection duties.

Staff at Sharples School will be alert to the fact that whilst Extremism and Radicalisation is broadly a safeguarding issue there may be some instances where a child or students may be at direct risk of harm or neglect. For example; this could be due to a child displaying risky behaviours in terms of the activities they are involved in or the groups they are associated with or staff may be aware of information about a child's family that may equally place a child at risk of harm. (These examples are for illustration and are not definitive or exhaustive). Therefore all adults working at Sharples School (including visiting staff, volunteers' contractors, and students on placement) are required to report instances where they believe a child may be at risk of harm or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.

12. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

C.Wood, Deputy Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead, leads the school's operational Prevent work and is the initial point of contact for concerns. Caroline Molyneux, Headteacher, provides senior leadership oversight. Available deputy DSLs provide cover in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; the pastoral team are DSL trained.

The DSL will oversee concerns, referrals, liaison with police, Bolton Prevent services, Children's Social Care and Channel partners; coordinate pupil support; maintain secure records; and ensure appropriate training and staff awareness of reporting arrangements.

The Headteacher and DSL will oversee implementation of the school's Prevent risk assessment and action plan, informed by current national guidance and local partner advice. Actions will identify a responsible officer, completion date, evidence and review of effectiveness. Governors or trustees will scrutinise implementation through safeguarding oversight.

Prevent responsibilities form part of the DSL's existing safeguarding role, including online safety, under [Keeping children safe in education 2026](#). Current deputy and governance arrangements are set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

13. Training

All staff will receive safeguarding and Prevent information at induction, including the school's reporting arrangements, relevant local risks and how to recognise and respond to concerns. Staff will complete annual Prevent training in line with the school's safeguarding training calendar, supported by ongoing briefings and updates when risks, guidance or procedures change.

Governors and trustees will receive appropriate safeguarding and Prevent training to support oversight. The DSL and deputies will undertake role-appropriate Prevent, referral and Channel training and maintain current knowledge of local arrangements. DSL safeguarding training will be updated at least every two years, with knowledge and skills refreshed at least annually.

Training will promote professional curiosity, Notice, Check, Share, understanding of terrorist ideologies and online radicalisation, proportionate assessment and respect for equality and lawful expression. Completion will be recorded, missed training followed up and effectiveness reviewed.

14. Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our school will follow guidance for safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked and that we complete and maintain a single central record of such vetting checks.

We will apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general and in doing so will deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement.

We will be alert to the possibility that persons may seek to gain positions within our school so as to unduly influence our school's character and ethos. We are aware that such persons seek to limit the opportunities for our students thereby rendering them vulnerable to extremist views and radicalisation as a consequence.

Therefore, by adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an ongoing culture of vigilance within our school and staff team we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

15. Role of the Governing Board

The governing board will ensure the school has appropriate arrangements to fulfil the Prevent duty, including clear leadership, trained staff, effective safeguarding referral pathways, a risk assessment and action plan, and suitable online and premises safeguards.

Governors or trustees will receive confidential safeguarding assurance about implementation, training completion, actions and the effectiveness of support, without unnecessary disclosure of pupils' identities. They will challenge gaps and monitor improvements.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL and Headteacher and submitted to the governing board for approval. It will be reviewed sooner following significant changes in guidance, local risks, school arrangements or lessons from incidents. The Prevent risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually and whenever material risks or circumstances change.

16. Policy Adoption, Monitoring and Review

This policy will be submitted to the governing board for approval as part of its duty to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare. It will be available on the school website and in hard copy on request. Approval details will be recorded on the cover once agreed.

At Sharples School, the Headteacher will actively evaluate the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring the staff group's understanding and application of the procedures within this policy as their overall duty to safeguard students.