

Guidance available to education bodies

To support schools, the Department for Education and Home Office jointly developed a website called “Educate Against Hate” providing teachers, school leaders and parents with guidance and support they need to protect children from radicalisation and extremism.²⁴ The website also includes advice on how to keep children safe from extremist influences online. Prevent for Further Education and Training (hosted and run by Education and Training Foundation) supports the Further Education sector and Safe Campus Communities (hosted by Universities UK) supports the higher education sector.²⁵

119 The Prevent statutory duty does not restrict debate or free speech in schools, colleges and universities. Moreover, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act explicitly sets out that, alongside the duty, “a specified authority must have particular regard to the duty to ensure freedom of speech.” Our schools, colleges and universities should be places in which children and young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics. Encouraging free speech and open debate is one of our most powerful tools in promoting critical thinking and preventing terrorist and extremist narratives taking hold.

Police

120 The police play a critical role in delivering Prevent, developing local partnerships and bringing together a wide range of organisations in communities to support the local delivery of projects to protect individuals from radicalisation. The police provide specialist support and capabilities to manage risk and disrupt those who are of interest to the authorities due to their extremist views, or who have links to those engaged in terrorism-related activity.

121 The police ensure that Prevent is embedded into all aspects of policing, including patrol, neighbourhood and safeguarding functions. Police officers often come into contact with vulnerable people in society, including those linked to counter-terrorism investigations, and are therefore well placed to identify those who are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and refer them on to appropriate support. The police are also uniquely placed to engage and where appropriate disrupt radicalising activity, in partnership with other agencies, and using the full range of their powers and resources.

Prevent referrals

122 If a member of the public or a frontline worker has a concern about an individual who they think might be vulnerable to radicalisation, they can refer them for appropriate support or intervention. Referrals from the general public can be made to their local authority or local police force. We encourage public sector staff to use their existing safeguarding mechanisms in the first place to deal with such concerns, which can often be managed informally and without onward referral. We will do more to increase the proportion of referrals that come from communities and friends and families of vulnerable individuals – people who are often the first to have concerns.

123 All referrals are received by the police to consider whether the individual in question is already under investigation, if there is a genuine vulnerability and if that vulnerability is related to terrorism. Referrals are confidential. In many cases, no further action is required, or the vulnerability is assessed as not related to radicalisation and an onward referral is made for

24 Online at: <http://educateagainsthate.com/>

25 Online at: <http://preventforfeandtraining.org.uk/>