

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act: Implications for Members working in Schools and Registered Childcare Providers (excluding Higher Education and Further Education)

The Act

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 has seven parts, of which Part 5 is of relevance to members of BACP.

Part 5 puts the Prevent strategy on a statutory footing, by placing a duty on specified authorities, in England, Wales and Scotland, to have due regard, when exercising their functions, to the need to prevent people from being radicalised and drawn into terrorism. The Prevent strategy, published by the government in 2011, is part of the UK's overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST.

The Prevent strategy has three specific strategic objectives:

1. Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat faced from those who promote it;
2. Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
3. Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that need to be addressed.

All specified authorities identified within the Act also need to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the risks of radicalisation within their area, institution or body. The three key themes identified by the government are:

1. Leadership
2. Working in Partnership
3. Staff Capabilities

The seven Things to Know About the Prevent Duty (Times Education Supplement, 2015)

1. **Start with a risk assessment:** *Understanding how and why young people can be put at risk of radicalisation and extremism is crucial to accurate risk assessments.*
2. **Ensure robust policies and procedures are in place:** *As with any safeguarding area, systems and processes need to be robustly established, regularly reviewed and communicated so that staff know how to respond to identified risks.*
3. **Staff must be appropriately trained:** *Staff should be empowered through training to have an awareness of the Prevent strategy, how to identify someone at risk of radicalisation, how to respond to identified risks and what support is available.*
4. **IT access must be safe:** *Appropriate IT policies and safeguards must be implemented to protect freedom of speech and freedom to access online information, whilst protecting young people from extremist material.*
5. **Effort and compliance will be monitored**

6. **Knowledge is the key:** *Good communication of knowledge between staff, leadership and external agencies is crucial to the successful implementation of Prevent duty systems.*
7. **Support is available:** *Support is available, by building links with Local Prevent Coordinators, police counter-terrorism units, safeguarding boards and training providers, it will assist institutions in accessing the support they need.*

Specified Local Authorities

- Proprietors of maintained schools, non-maintained special schools, maintained nursery schools, independent schools (including academies and free schools) and alternative provision academies
- Pupil referral units
- Registered early years childcare providers
- Registered later years childcare providers
- Providers of holiday schemes for disabled children
- Persons exercising local authority functions under a direction of the Secretary of State when the local authority is performing inadequately

Working in Partnership

Governing Bodies and proprietors of all schools and registered childcare providers should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

Risk Assessment and Action Plan

Specified authorities (see above) will need to demonstrate robust safeguarding policies are in place to identify children at risk of radicalisation or being drawn into terrorism.

An action should also be developed to outline what steps and interventions will be taken should a risk be identified.

Staff Training

Staff working within specified authorities should be given an appropriate level of training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and know how to refer them onto further support and intervention programmes.

If a member of staff identifies a potential risk then they should feel confident that their responsibilities are to follow their school's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing it with the school's designated safeguarding lead.

Key Resources:

The Department for Education operates a dedicated phone helpline (020 7340 724) for staff and governors to raise concerns about extremism directly. This can also be done by email

via: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk. This phone and email line is not intended for use in emergencies.

Prevent Duty: Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf (Link accessed 11 August 2015)

Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417943/Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales.pdf (Link accessed 11 August 2015)

Times Education Supplement - <https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/7-things-schools-need-to-know-about-the-new-prevent-duty-11032731> (Link accessed 16th October 2015)