



HEADTEACHERS'  
**PREVENT BOARD**  
STOKE-ON-TRENT

**Safeguarding Policy:-**

# **Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation in Education Settings**

**November 2025**



**St Mary's Catholic Academy**

*"Many hearts, one accord: In God's love we learn and grow together to build the kingdom of God."*

*(Schools' Mission Statement)*

Approved by: / Local  
Academy Committee

Date: November 2025

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:

November 2026

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## 1. Introduction

St Mary's Catholic Academy is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils/learners, where they feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at St Mary's Catholic Academy recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, irrespective of the role they undertake and whether or not their role has direct contact or responsibility for children and young people.

Children may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of St Mary's Catholic Academy's safeguarding approach.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Definitions

**Ideology** - a set of beliefs.

**Extremism** - a vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.<sup>2</sup>

**Radicalisation** - the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.<sup>3</sup>

**Terrorism** – is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.<sup>4</sup>

## 3. Guidance and Legislation

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<sup>1</sup>: [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (01 September 2025)

<sup>2</sup> As defined in the Revised [Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales](#) (Updated 01 April 2021)

<sup>3</sup> As defined in the Revised [Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales](#) (Updated 01 April 2021)

<sup>4</sup> As defined in the [Terrorism Act 2000](#) (TACT 2000)

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard<sup>5</sup> to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.”<sup>6</sup> This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy draws upon the guidance contained in:-

- Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements; August 2022
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#); DfE: September 2025
- [Teaching Approaches that help Build Resilience to Extremism among Young People](#); DfE 2011
- [Report into Allegations Concerning Birmingham Schools Arising from Trojan Horse Letter](#); Peter Clarke; July 2014.
- [Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in Schools](#); Nov 2014
- [Prevent duty guidance](#), updated March 2024

In adhering to this policy and the procedures therein, staff and visitors will comply with our statutory duties to:-

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of all children as set out in s175 and s157 of the Education Act 2002.
- Contribute to the delivery of the outcomes for all children, as set out in s10 (2) of the Children Act 2004.
- Have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, as set out in s26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

#### **4. School/College Ethos and Practice**

St Mary's Catholic Academy recognises the Governments concern that the UK continues to face a threat from terrorism. One security concern is the potential for British citizens and residents to become radicalised and commit acts of violence or terrorism.

Violent Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) as:

*"The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views, which:*

- *Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;*
- *Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;*
- *Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts;*
- *Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK."*

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<sup>5</sup> According to the Prevent duty guidance 'having due regard' means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

<sup>6</sup> "Terrorism" for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

Extremism can take many forms including that linked to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist, Al Qaeda/Daesh ideologies, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and that linked to Animal or Environmental Rights movements. It also includes school massacre and Incel ideology.

Our school/college is a safe place where pupils/learners can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens. However, there is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school/college, whether from internal sources – pupils/learners, staff or governors; or external sources – school/college community, external agencies or individuals.

As a school/college we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children 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 pupils/learners.

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, we will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our pupils/learners are enriched, understand and accept difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.

Furthermore, 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, including 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 pupils/learners or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our *Behaviour Policy for pupils/learners* and the Code of Conduct for staff.

We will follow our own internal procedures for dealing with safeguarding concerns or allegations against those working in or on behalf of our school/college in a paid or unpaid capacity. This includes contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Where extremism concerns linked to an educational professional are raised with the LADO, the Operational Delivery Team within the Counter Extremism Division of the Department for Education should also be notified.

- [Report Extremism in Education - Start](#)
- [Non-statutory guidance for designated safeguarding leads on safeguarding learners](#)

**As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities school/college staff will be alert to:-**

- Disclosures by pupils/learners of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school/college, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where pupils/learners have not actively sought these out.

- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images.
- Pupils/learners accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites.
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance.
- Partner schools/colleges, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools/colleges or settings.
- Pupils/learners 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, sexuality, ethnicity or culture.
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others.

Our school/college will closely follow any locally agreed procedures as set out by the Local Authority and Local Safeguarding Children Partnership to safeguard individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

## 5. 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 children may experience elsewhere may make it harder for them to challenge or question these radical influences. In our school/college, this will be achieved by good teaching, primarily via PSHE and Citizenship tutorials; but also by adopting the methods outlined in the Government's guidance [‘Teaching approaches that help build resilience to extremism among young people’](#) DfE 2011.

We will ensure that all of our teaching approaches help our pupils/learners build resilience to extremism and give pupils/learners a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. To achieve this, we will:

- Promote critical thinking and fundamental British values through PSHE, RSHE, and Citizenship.
- Create safe spaces for discussion of controversial issues.
- Equip staff to recognise extremism and challenge it confidently.
- Adapt teaching approaches to address current issues of extremism and radicalisation.

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 to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation. In doing so we will apply the 'key ingredients' for success following the three broad categories of:-

- Making a connection with young people through good [teaching] design and a pupil/learner centred approach.
- Facilitating a 'safe space' for dialogue, and
- Equipping our pupils/learners with the appropriate skills, knowledge, understanding and awareness for resilience.

Therefore, this approach will be embedded within the ethos of our school/college so that pupils/learners know and understand what safe and acceptable behaviour is in the context of extremism and radicalisation.

This will work in conjunction with our schools/colleges approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils/learners and will include the sound use of assemblies/tutorials to help further promote this rounded development of our pupils/learners.

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 providing a curriculum that includes:-

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

We will also work with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to ensure our school/college understands and embraces our local context and values in challenging extremist views, and to assist in the broadening of our pupil's/learner's experiences and horizons.

We will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We will teach and encourage pupils/learners to respect one another and to respect difference, especially those of different faith or no faith. It is indeed our most fundamental responsibility to keep our pupils/learners safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

We will help support pupils/learners who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a pupil/learner is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences, we will ensure that that pupil/learner is offered support through referral to the Prevent Programme – see section 13.

## **6. Use of External Agencies and Speakers**

We encourage the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our pupils/learners. However, we will positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences for our pupils/learners.

<http://educateagainsthate.com/downloads/HostingSpeakersAdvice.pdf>

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 opposition to, the school's/college'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 curriculum so we need to ensure that this work is of benefit to pupils/learners.

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

- Any messages communicated to pupils/learners are consistent with the ethos of the school/college 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 pupils/learners 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 pupils/learners.
- Activities are carefully evaluated by the school/college to ensure that they are effective.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school/college is to encourage pupils/learners 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, we will strive to ensure our pupils/learners recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves, where appropriate to their age and ability; but also, to help pupils/learners develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate

## **7. Whistle Blowing**

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation, pupils/learners and staff are able to discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If, for any reason they feel unable to do this, then they are able to make use of our internal systems to Whistle Blow or raise any issue in confidence. Please refer to School/College Whistle Blowing Policy.

## **8. Child Protection**

Please refer to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for the full procedural framework.

Staff 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 children 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 the school/college (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.

## 9. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is: Mrs Sarah Rathbone (principal)

The Deputy DSL are: Mrs Debra Statham(head of school) and Mrs Carrie Scarlett (safeguarding officer).

- The role of the DSL is set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- The DSL holds specific Prevent responsibilities and receives in-depth training refreshed every two years.

The DSL is the focus person who school/college staff, and others, may come to if they have concerns about an individual child's safety or well-being, and they are the first point of contact for external agencies.

The DSL is also the person who leads on concerns regarding extremism or radicalisation.

Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) in schools should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools.

Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) in colleges should familiarise themselves with the [Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales](#).

The Department has published further advice for [those working in education settings with safeguarding responsibilities on the Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

Where there are concerns regarding extremism and radicalisation, the DSL will liaise with the local authority Prevent Lead and make referrals where appropriate – see section 13.

In addition, the DSL will:

- Share information lawfully under GDPR and safeguarding exemptions.
- Ensure secure transfer of Prevent-related information when a pupil moves schools.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings.

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of

radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) making a referral to Prevent.

The DSL will ensure that the Annual Prevent risk assessment tailored to local threats, including online radicalisation risks. Action plans will implemented where risks are identified.

## 10. Training

Whole school training on Safeguarding and Child Protection will be organised for staff and governors at least every two years. This training should be approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership and will, in part, include training on extremism and radicalisation and its safeguarding implications.

The government has a [Prevent e-learning platform](#) which includes courses on:

- Prevent awareness
- Making referrals to Prevent
- Understanding Channel

Additionally, in Stoke-on-Trent, Prevent awareness training can be accessed via the local authority.

The DSLs will attend training courses as necessary and the appropriate inter-agency training organised by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership at least every two years.

In addition, the school will:

- Maintain records of Prevent training, referrals, and risk assessments for inspection.
- Use DfE Prevent self-assessment tools to monitor compliance.

## 11. Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting all staff, (permanent, temporary and volunteers;) to our school/college will follow statutory guidance in [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#).

We will apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general, which include, but are not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are 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 including social media checks.

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

Therefore, by operating safer recruitment best practice and by ensuring an ongoing culture of vigilance within our school/college, we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

## 12. Role of Governing Body

The Governing Body of our school/college will undertake appropriate training to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibilities as Governors, including their statutory safeguarding duties. The governors monitor Prevent compliance and review risk assessments annually, ensuring a culture of safeguarding.

The Governing Body of our school/college will support the ethos and values of our school/college and will support the school/college in tackling extremism and radicalisation. [www.gov.uk/government/publications/birmingham-schools-education-commissioners-report](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/birmingham-schools-education-commissioners-report)

In line with Recommendation 13 of Peter Clarke's report details of our Governing Body will be published on our school/college website to promote transparency.

In line with the provisions set out in the DfE guidance [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#) the governing body will challenge the school's/college's senior management team on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness.

Governors will review this policy annually and may amend and adopt it outside of this timeframe in accordance with any new legislation or guidance or in response to any quality assurance recommendations pertaining to the delivery of this policy and the overall safeguarding arrangements made.

## 13. PREVENT in the Stoke-on-Trent locality

Stoke-on-Trent responds to the Government's [national counter-terrorism strategy](#), which aims to stop people being drawn into or supporting terrorism through the Prevent Board which is accountable to Stoke-on-Trent Community Safety Partnership. The Board ensures delivery of the specific requirements:

- Of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which requires specified authorities in the exercise of their functions to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"
- Home Office Prevent Duty Toolkit for Local Authorities and Partner Agencies

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a referral to Prevent.

For further information about Prevent please contact:

Iftikhar Ahmed, Community Cohesion Officer – Outreach, [iftikhar.ahmed@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:iftikhar.ahmed@stoke.gov.uk)

## 14. Channel Panel

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. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to

determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. As a Channel partner, the school or college will be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel Guidance](#), and a [Channel Awareness e-learning programme](#) is available for staff.

**It is important to trust your professional judgement – if you are concerned that someone is at risk of getting involved in extremism, you should discuss this with your DSL without delay. Follow 'Notice, Check, Share' procedure and use the national Prevent referral form.**

The DSL will liaise with the Local Authority Prevent Lead and Staffordshire Police Prevent Team to discuss and make a referral if necessary.

When a referral is received, the Prevent team will, in partnership with other safeguarding professionals, investigate further to assess the nature and extent of the risk and develop the most appropriate support package for the individual concerned.

**Staffordshire Police Prevent Team can be contacted on:-**

Tel: 01785 232054      E-mail: [prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk)

## **15. Reporting online material promoting terrorism or extremism**

The internet is used by some people to promote terrorism and extremism. St Mary's Catholic Academy is committed to ensuring that students are not able to access extremist ideas or materials online in school/college. We will challenge and report any terrorist and extremist content found online, which is offensive or illegal.

To strengthen this commitment, the school will:

- Implement Prevent-linked filtering standards to block extremist content and ensure safe online access.
- Report extremist content via the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU) referral process when such material is identified.

As private citizens, members of staff can also report such material, anonymously if necessary, by clicking on the national reporting link: <https://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism>.



Examples of material that should be reported include:

- Articles, images, speeches or videos that promote terrorism or encourage violence.
- Content encouraging people to commit acts of terrorism.
- Websites made by terrorist or extremist organisations.
- Videos of terrorist attacks.

The national Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU) investigates reported material and will try to secure its removal as quickly as possible.

## **16. Department for Education – Preventing extremism in schools and children’s services**

The DFE have set up a helpline that schools and other organisations working with children can contact if they have concerns about radicalisation:

Tel: 020 7340 7264 E-mail: [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk)

If you are concerned about extremism in a school or another organisation that works with children, or if you think a child might be at risk of extremism, contact their helpline.

Open Monday to Friday from 9am to 6pm (excluding bank holidays).

[Educate Against Hate](#) – Created by the DfE, the website offers parents, teachers and governors practical advice on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.