

Oldbury Wells School

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

January 2026

FREQUENCY OF REVIEW:	Annually
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Introduction

This 'Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy' is part of our commitment to keeping children safe. All staff working in Oldbury Wells School recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for students or not.

When operating this policy, Oldbury Wells School uses the following Governmental definition of extremism which is:

'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; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

In March 2015, new statutory duties were placed on schools by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) which means they must work to prevent children being drawn into extremism. The full Government Prevent Strategy can be viewed at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

This policy draws on both statutory and non-statutory guidance.

Statutory Duties

- Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Prevent Duty Guidance (2015)
- Working together to Safeguard Children (2018)

Non-Statutory Guidance

- The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (DfE 2015)
- Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools: Departmental advice for maintained school (DfE 2014)
- Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils: supplementary information (DfE 2014)

Other Related Policies Within School

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- E-safety/ICT Policy
- Teaching and Learning policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

At Oldbury Wells 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.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

1.1 Role of the Governing Body

It is the role of the governing body to ensure that the school meets its statutory duties with regard to preventing radicalisation.

1.2 Role of the Headteacher

It is the headteachers role to:

- Ensure that the schools and its staff respond to preventing radicalisation on a day-to-day basis
- Ensure that the school's curriculum addresses the issues involved in radicalisation
- Ensure that staff conduct is consistent with preventing radicalisation
- Report to the governing body on these matters

1.3 Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead

It is the role of the safeguarding lead to:

- Ensure that staff understand the issues of radicalisation, are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability of radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns
- Receive safeguarding concerns about children and young people who may be vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation or are showing signs of radicalisation
- Making referrals to appropriate agencies with regard to concerns about radicalisation
- Liaise with partners, including the local authority and police
- Offer support and advice to staff

1.4 Role of Staff

It is the role of staff to understand the issues of radicalisation, are able to recognise signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know to refer concerns to the Designated Lead promptly.

1.5 Curriculum and Teaching Approaches

We will ensure that all of our teaching approaches helps our pupils build resilience to extremism and give pupils a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. We will ensure that all our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it.

We will 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 may make it harder for them to challenge or question these radical influences. In our school this will be achieved primarily through PSHE.

We will be flexible to adapt our teaching approaches, as appropriate, so as to address specific issues as to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation.

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 restorative approach addressed through the curriculum and the behaviour policy.

At Oldbury Wells School, 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 pupils to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or not faith. It is indeed our most fundamental responsibility to keep our students safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

1.6 IT

At Oldbury Wells School, we will ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school by having secure filters which will block inappropriate content.

Pupils and staff are aware of the procedures in school for reporting any concerns relating to inappropriate content found on the internet.

Pupils and staff are aware of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

Staff have read and understand 'How Social Media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq – Briefing note for schools DfE 2015'.

1.7 Staff Training

Statutory guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. The Safeguarding and Welfare Officer at Oldbury Wells School has attended a Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) and will ensure that the key messages are filtered down to all staff members. Staff are aware of the signs of vulnerability and indicators of radicalisation and extremism as set out in Appendix 1.

The National Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters in conjunction with the College of Policing have developed a general awareness e-learning package for Prevent. Staff at Oldbury Wells School have completed this and for those staff that are new in post will as part of their induction complete this (accessed at <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html>).

1.8 Working in Partnership

We will work in partnership with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to raise awareness of radicalisation and supporting us with implementing the Prevent Duty.

Oldbury Wells School will engage effectively with parents/families to assist and advise of support mechanisms if concern is raised.

The school will ensure that safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP).

1.9 Use of External Agencies and Speakers

At Oldbury Wells School, we encourage the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our pupils. We will ensure that any visitor coming into the school has been 'checked' appropriately in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015. 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.

2. Referral Process

If a member of staff has a concern about a particular pupil/s they should follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, as set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2.1 Working in Partnership

We will work in partnership with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to raise awareness of radicalisation and supporting us with implementing the Prevent Duty.

Oldbury Wells will engage effectively with parents/families to assist and advise of support mechanisms if concern is raised

3. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body but may need to be adapted as and when new guidance or policy is released.

Parents will be issued with a hard copy of this policy on request. This policy will also be made available to parents via the school website.

Appendix 1

Recognising the indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors – it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity crisis – the student/pupil distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- Personal crisis – the student/pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing family friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
- Personal circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the pupil’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
- Unmet aspirations – the student/pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
- Experiences of criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration;
- Special educational needs – students/pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis.

How social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq – Briefing note for schools.



Home Office



Department
for Education

HOW SOCIAL MEDIA IS USED TO ENCOURAGE TRAVEL TO SYRIA AND IRAQ BRIEFING NOTE FOR SCHOOLS

Terrorist organisations, such as ISIL, are trying to radicalise and recruit young people through an extensive use of social media and the internet. Young people, some as young as 14, have tried to leave the UK to travel to join ISIL and other terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq.

As with other online harms, every teacher needs to be aware of the risks posed by the online activity of extremist and terrorist groups. This briefing note is aimed at head teachers, teachers and safeguarding leads and provides advice about online terrorist and extremist material. It includes a short summary of some of the main ISIL propaganda claims and identifies social media sites which ISIL is using.

What action do schools and teachers need to take?

Schools have a vital role to play in protecting pupils from the risks of extremism and radicalisation. Keeping children safe from risks posed by terrorist exploitation of social media should be approached in the same way as safeguarding children from any other online abuse.

- In the same way that teachers are vigilant about signs of possible physical or emotional abuse in any of their pupils, if you have a concern for the safety of a specific young person at risk of radicalisation, **you should follow your school's safeguarding procedures**, including discussing with your school's designated safeguarding lead, and where deemed necessary, with children's social care. If you are in a 'Prevent' priority area, your local authority will have a 'Prevent' lead who can also provide support.
- **You can also contact your local police force or dial 101** (the non-emergency number). They can talk to you in confidence about your concerns and help you gain access to support and advice.
- **The local authority or police might suggest a referral to the 'Channel' programme.** 'Channel' is a voluntary Government funded programme which aims to safeguard children and adults from being drawn into terrorist activity. 'Channel' can provide a support plan and specific interventions to protect people at risk, including mentoring support or an ideological or theological intervention. If you want to find out more about 'Channel' [click here](#) or call 101 to discuss your concerns.

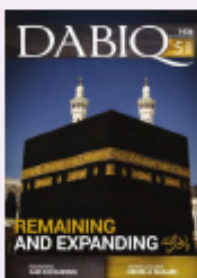
If you are concerned that a child's life is in immediate danger, or that they may be imminently planning to travel to Syria or Iraq dial 999 or call the confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321.

For further background information on the roles of schools and teachers in safeguarding children, and preventing pupils from the risks of terrorism and extremism the following documents will be of use:

- **Keeping children safe in education:** statutory guidance for schools and colleges
- **Prevent Duty Guidance:** for specified authorities in England and Wales on the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

PROPAGANDA THEMES

ISIL, also sometimes referred to as ISIS, is a violent terrorist group which has caused huge suffering to people in both Syria and Iraq in the name of an Islamist extremist ideology. They are a brutal group that wants to impose rule on people and has used violence and extortion. ISIL's claim to have established an 'Islamic State' or 'caliphate' in the region has no theological credibility.



ISIL propaganda includes images and videos that present the group as an exciting alternative to life in the West. This media presents ISIL as the powerful creators of a new state, to which all Muslims (male and female) have a duty to travel. The propaganda continuously ignores the fact that ISIL is a terrorist organisation engaged in killing innocent men, women and children. When ISIL's official media groups release material online the group encourages supporters on social media to share the material – this is what gives ISIL its large reach, particularly to young people.

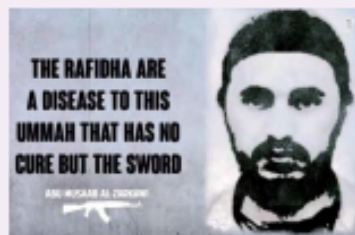
ISIL propaganda uses **four main themes** to encourage young people to travel to Syria and Iraq. These themes are used to recruit both men and women, and are also widely used in discussions on social media around ISIL.



ISIL celebrates and promotes an **image of success** online in order to attract young people – it tells them that ISIL are the winning side and can offer them an exciting life. The ISIL slogan 'Baqiyah wa-Tatamaddad' (remaining and expanding) presents the group as one that consistently achieves success. ISIL propaganda ignores the reality that ISIL are not winning and are opposed by the majority of people in Syria and Iraq.



ISIL portray their 'Caliphate' as an ideal, utopian state where Muslims will find **status and belonging**. ISIL propaganda claims that it is the duty of Muslim men and women in the West to travel there and regularly states that all foreigners are welcome in its ranks, so long as they are Sunni Muslims. In reality the claimed Caliphate has been rejected by the overwhelming majority of Islamic scholars around the world. ISIL abuse of women and children and killing of innocent civilians has been well documented.



The propaganda output of ISIL insists that it is the **personal duty** of Muslims to support them and travel to the 'Caliphate'. Islamic scholars have clearly dismissed this and have made clear there is no such obligation. ISIL wants to portray itself as the only group able to **defend Sunnis** from the Assad regime, the Iraqi army or the threat of the West. ISIL communications also show the group providing food and services to people in Syria and Iraq. In reality most Sunnis fear and oppose ISIL and recognise that they are a threat to their lives and security.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Social media has become an essential and exciting part of how we live. Millions of young people use these platforms daily to share content. But there are a small minority of users who exploit social media to radicalise and recruit vulnerable people.

The government and police work closely with the communications industry to remove extremist and terrorist content from the internet. Since February 2010, over 95,000 pieces of terrorist content have been removed from the internet and the companies' below continue to work with us to limit the abuse of their platforms by terrorists and their supporters. However, more content is uploaded all the time by people from this country and elsewhere who have joined ISIL in Syria and Iraq. Many of these people have an established online identity using platforms described below.

Many community based organisations respond to ISIL propaganda and debunk its messages. For example, London-based group **Families Against Stress and Trauma (FAST)** have designed an online guide for parents on the dangers of radicalisation, as well as producing a YouTube film with testimonies from parents whose children have travelled to Syria. They are currently sharing their knowledge in a series of parenting workshops.



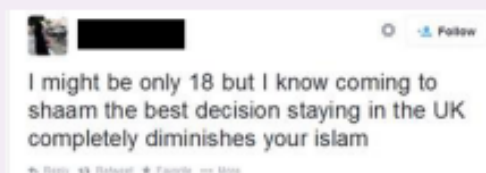
FACEBOOK

ISIL supporters use Facebook to share content, such as news stories and YouTube videos, among their peer groups.



TWITTER

Twitter is another popular social media platform for pro-ISIL accounts and those sharing ISIL propaganda. It is easy to establish an account, stay relatively anonymous and share material with large numbers of people.



Appendix 2

YOUTUBE

YouTube is also used to host videos, both of official ISIL output and videos created by users themselves. Multiple 'dummy' accounts will be set up so that when videos are taken down they can be reposted quickly.

Users will post YouTube links across their own social media platforms in order to disseminate material, particularly Twitter and Facebook.

ASK.FM

People considering travel to Syria or Iraq sometimes use Ask.fm to ask British jihadis and female ISIL supporters about travel, living standards, recruitment, fighting and broader ideology.



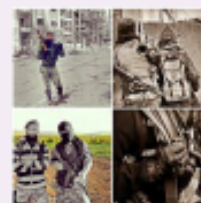
The answers given by ISIL supporters are encouraging, saying all their difficulties will be solved if they travel to the region.



INSTAGRAM

Instagram is used by fighters and ISIL supporters to share the photosets frequently produced by various ISIL media organisations.

ISIL supporters also use Instagram to share pictures of their life in Syria, often showing landscapes and images suggesting they are living a full and happy life.



TUMBLR

Tumblr, the blogging site, is exploited by fighters to promote longer, theological arguments for travel.

Tumblr is popular with female ISIL supporters, who have written blogs addressing the concerns girls have about travelling to the region, such as leaving their families behind and living standards in Syria.



PRIVATE MESSAGING

On social media, ISIL supporters frequently encourage others to message them on closed peer-to-peer networks when asked for sensitive information, such as on how to travel to the region, what to pack and who to contact when they arrive.



Popular private messaging apps include WhatsApp, Kik, SureSpot and Viber.

LANGUAGE USED BY ISIL

ISIL relies heavily on Islamic terminology, and often twists its meaning, to reinforce the impression that it is fighting for a religious cause and has established a truly Islamic state.

Terms used in ISIL propaganda and by supporters on social media include:

Dawla/Dawlah - A term used to describe ISIL by its supporters, an alternative to 'Islamic State.'

Caliphate - A Caliphate (or Khilafah) is a form of government used by early Muslims, under a single leader, or Caliph. ISIL supporters describe the territory the group controls in Iraq and Syria as the 'Caliphate'.

Jihad - Literally meaning 'struggle,' jihad can also refer to violence. Extremists may claim that undertaking violent jihad is obligatory for Muslims.

Mujahid - Someone who fights jihad, the plural of which is mujahideen.

Hijrah - Referring originally to the journey made by the Prophet Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina, today hijrah is used by many to mean moving from a non-Muslim country to a Muslim country. ISIL uses this term to reinforce the idea that there is a religious obligation to travel to their so called Caliphate.

Shahada - This can refer both to the Islamic declaration of faith (the first of the five pillars of Islam) and to someone considered to have achieved martyrdom. In this case they will be referred to as a 'Shaheed'.

Kaffir/kuffar - A pejorative term used to describe non-Muslims, on the basis that they reject the tenets of Islam.

Ummah - This is the concept of the world community of Muslims, who are bound by common faith. ISIL regularly makes claims to be representing the 'one true Ummah' and that it is building a community for them.

Rafidha - The Arabic word for 'rejecters' or 'those who refuse', it is a term used to describe those believed to reject Islamic authority and leadership. 'Rafidha' is often used by ISIL supporters as a pejorative or sectarian term against Shia Muslims.

Sham - A classical Arabic term used to describe the region of the Levant, largely focused on Syria.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7f64ac40f0b6230268f3a8/How_social_media_is_used_to_encourage_travel_to_Syria_and_Iraq.pdf