



**The Sixth Form College
North Hill
Colchester
CO1 1SN**

**t: 01206 500700
f: 01206 500770**

www.colchsfc.ac.uk

Policy Documents 'Prevent' Strategy

SIXTH FORM COLLEGE COLCHESTER - 'PREVENT' Strategy

What is the Prevent Duty?

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies, listed in Schedule 3 to the Act (including schools and colleges), to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

What is Extremism?

The government has defined extremism in the Prevent strategy as: "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." This also includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces

What are British Values?

British values are defined as "democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs"; institutions are expected to encourage students to respect other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The aim of this strategy is to:

- Develop an awareness of Prevent in the College
- Recognise current practice which contributes to the Prevent agenda
- Identify areas for improvement and respond to these.

National Picture

The government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, has four elements: Pursue, Protect, Prepare and Prevent. Prevent aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The focus is on Al-Qaeda and ISIS related activity but also adopts the approaches used with other groups including the far right.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act of 2015 places a duty on education providers, alongside other agencies, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). Education, like other key sectors, has a responsibility to promote values of openness, tolerance and facilitating free debate which is central to being a British citizen. With the current government alert at severe the College needs to be aware of risks and raise awareness within its community.

Context

The government has defined **extremism** in the Prevent strategy as: "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." This also includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces

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The Government's document *Channel: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (2012)* says that "all communities are affected by the threat from terrorism but the nature and extent of the threat will vary across the country: local responses need to be appropriate and proportionate to local circumstances... Prevent's focus is on preventing individuals from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism rather than the promotion of more general work on community cohesion or integration."

On one hand, the ethnic demographic of the College student and staff community indicates that College is not at significant risk of radicalisation of groups of like-minded students. However, any student who is vulnerable might be susceptible to radicalisation. Prevent therefore sits within Safeguarding in College.

Guidance material for Prevent suggests that that students who show the following characteristics might be at risk of being drawn into radicalisation:

- susceptibility to indoctrination;
- being at a transitional time in life;
- a need for identity, meaning and belonging;
- being influenced or controlled by a group;
- feelings of grievance and injustice;
- feeling under threat due to recent conflict or absent family relationships;
- mental health issues which are not being addressed;
- a desire for status; a desire for excitement and adventure;
- a need to dominate others; a desire for political or moral change.

1. Local Partnerships

- 1.1 The College has a working partnership with local Safeguarding agencies including Essex Police, Essex County Council and Essex Social Services. We collaborate productively if students or staff are under investigation and commit to a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation.
- 1.2 Information sharing should be in line with the College's Safeguarding and Data Protection policies, as well as the guidelines laid out in *Channel: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (2012)*
- 1.3 The College has strong links with partner schools and information sharing on vulnerable students is a key part of work in admitting and enrolling new students. This is important to help understand potential tensions within our youth communities and support transition arrangements for some of the most vulnerable students.

2. College

- 2.1 The following aspects of the College's work link closely to the Prevent agenda:
 - College Mission Statement
 - Child Protection Policy
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Equality & Diversity Policy
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education
 - Safer recruitment – including governors.
 - Senior Tutors and Pastoral Team
- 2.2 Prevent sits within Safeguarding at the College. The Safeguarding policy states that "the College recognises that the welfare of its students is paramount and takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young people in its care. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students are protected and to enable staff and volunteers to safeguard and promote the welfare of students whilst promoting a culture which makes the College a safer place to learn."
- 2.3 The Safeguarding policy and procedures are well established and understood by staff. The Safeguarding Team meets regularly and any concerns raised under the Prevent agenda are discussed within this group.
- 2.4 Whilst Prevent sits within the College safeguarding policy and procedures, other aspects of College life contribute to the agenda:
 - Equality & Diversity
 - Additional Studies programme
 - Bullying and Harassment policy
 - Tutorial programme
 - Charity Fundraising
 - Student Forums and Student Voice
 - Student Council
 - Chaplain

- 2.5 The College has an active Equality and Diversity officer and an Equality and Diversity committee who are aware of the actions of the safeguarding Team in relation to Prevent. Equality and Diversity is a standing item on all College meetings.
- 2.6 Risk of Radicalisation of a student has been added to the Risk Register and is monitored by the Senior Management Executive and the Governors' Audit Committee.

3. Staff

- 3.1 New statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" was introduced in April 2014, updated in 2015. From this guidance, the College introduced a new Safeguarding information booklet which reinforced the behaviours it expected of staff. Further developments have also taken place around safer recruitment practice to ensure that all safeguarding procedures are in place.
- 3.2 It is every staff member's responsibility to respond appropriately to students whose behaviours are challenging and inappropriate. Line managers support and encourage staff in this and skills are developed through INSET.
- 3.3 The Prevent strategy formed part of compulsory internal Safeguarding INSET during summer term 2015. The Safeguarding team will continue to monitor and respond to government, local authority and police advice.
- 3.4 A leaflet "The Prevent Duty at The Sixth Form College, Colchester - What do I need to know?" was distributed to all staff Autumn 2015. This provided all staff with a clear reminder of their responsibilities and advice on embedding British Values in teaching, pastoral guidance and other work. This was further discussed in subsequent department meetings and divisional meetings.

4. Curriculum and Welfare Support

- 4.1 A core aim of the College curriculum is to produce students who are:
- Responsible citizens, which includes understanding identity, valuing diversity and working co-operatively to promote positive change
 - Confident individuals, which includes developing independence, self-awareness and moral judgments
 - Successful learners, which includes developing enquiring minds, and engaging with the big issues of our world.
- 4.2 The College systematically reviews its performance to ensure it narrows the attainment gap with vulnerable or disadvantaged groups/communities who may or may not be more likely to be subject to radicalisation.
- 4.3 The College offers a wide range of subjects, many of which will make reference to values and ethics e.g. Law, Health & Social Care, Religious Studies, Psychology. Teaching staff address controversial issues, challenge misinformed views and perceptions amongst students, challenge commonly held myths and build understanding and appreciation about others. Opportunities to continue to develop these skills are available through ongoing INSET opportunities.
- 4.4 Following the OFSTED report of Feb 2013, Equality and Diversity has become a key focus of internal lesson observations. The Teaching and Learning group shares good practice on embedding Equality and Diversity in lessons. Academic Departments have also been responsible for developing materials and approaches in order to respond to this issue. Advice on embedding teaching of British Values in teaching and learning, pastoral guidance and other College work was given on a leaflet in Autumn 2015 to all staff and followed up by discussion in meetings including Divisional and Department meetings.
- 4.5 Students receive outstanding pastoral and curricular support which helps them to stay in college and complete their courses. There are very good procedures to identify vulnerable students, for example, those in public care, and their welfare and progress is closely monitored by Personal Tutors and Senior Tutors. Senior Staff meet regularly and concerns are shared.

5. Student Engagement

- 5.1 Developing “active citizenship” is evident through activities such as the following:
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
 - GCSE Citizenship and Active Citizenship EPQ
 - Volunteering
 - Student Ambassador roles
 - Student voice
 - Fundraising
 - Expeditions to the developing world including India, Sri Lanka and Peru.
 - Activities such as Black History Month
 - The work of the LGBT group
- 5.2 Listening and responding where appropriate to a wide range of Student Voice feedback is central to the College. Student voice is heard in a variety of formats to reach a wide range of students through online Questionnaires (regarding their experience at College generally and specifically), subject specific student forums, student committees, the College Council and the OFSTED Learner View.
- 5.3 The opportunity for students to explore controversial and challenging material is integral to many curriculum areas and Additional Studies. In lessons and supervised sessions, there are clear boundaries. Where students have the opportunity to explore their own topics, supervising staff have mechanisms in place to ensure that there is an early warning about sensitive issues and that students are given the necessary guidance and support. Examples include GCSE Citizenship day of action, EPQ and IB extended essays, College Magazine and Online Journal.
- 5.4 Materials such as posters and noticeboards are tightly controlled. A nominated senior member of staff has responsibility for approving materials.
- 5.5 The College has a range of methods for staff and students to confidentially raise concerns.
- 5.6 The weekly Tutorial programme, through a range of individual and group activities provides an effective way of providing students with:
- time to explore sensitive or controversial issues,
 - the knowledge and skills to understand and manage difficult situations,
 - the ability to recognise and manage risk and make safer choices,
 - recognition of when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and wellbeing
 - help to develop positive character traits, such as resilience, determination, self-esteem, and confidence

6. External groups using College premises/facilities

- 6.1 The College recognises that it is possible that individuals or groups linked to violent extremism could try to use College premises for campaigning. All requests for external bookings are closely vetted and if there are any concerns, these are checked with the local authorities or police.
- 6.2 The College has an External Speakers protocol which seeks to ensure that all external visitors comply with the Equality and Diversity policy.

7. ICT

- 7.1 Internet access via the college system is filtered by Websense which seeks to block extremist material. The software is updated regularly. The College has an internet use policy which is updated regularly, is printed in the student handbook and highlighted to students by Personal Tutors as part of their induction. The internet policy obliges students to connect to the College wifi while they are working in College, thereby ensuring that internet access is filtered, limiting access to inappropriate material so far as is reasonably possible.