

Prevent Policy

More Than Ed | Independent School

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This policy works alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to protect our students from all forms of harm.

1. Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines how More Than Ed fulfils its duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, and has regard to the Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023), to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

We recognise that students with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs may be particularly vulnerable to radicalisation due to:

- Social isolation and difficulty forming peer relationships
- Low self-esteem and identity issues
- Experiences of trauma or rejection
- Seeking belonging and acceptance
- Vulnerability to online grooming
- Difficulty processing and critically evaluating information

2. Definitions

Extremism: 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.

Radicalisation: the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies.

Terrorism: an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people, causes serious damage to property, or seriously interferes with an electronic system, and is designed to influence government or intimidate the public for political, religious or ideological gain.

British values: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance.

3. Understanding Our Students' Vulnerabilities

Our students face unique vulnerability factors that require careful consideration. Their experiences of social isolation and difficulty forming peer relationships can create a heightened need for belonging that extremist groups may exploit. Common challenges, including identity issues, previous trauma and emotional dysregulation, may impair their ability to critically evaluate the materials or ideologies they encounter.

Our one-to-one teaching model, while providing intensive support, potentially limits natural peer interaction and exposure to diverse perspectives. Combined with high levels of technology use for educational purposes, this creates additional risk factors that require vigilant monitoring and support.

Our approach is based on:

- Early intervention: identifying concerns before they escalate.
- Therapeutic understanding: recognising behaviour changes in the context of SEMH needs.
- Proportionate response: balancing vigilance with not criminalising normal teenage behaviour.
- Multi-agency working: collaborating with parents, carers and external agencies.
- Education: building resilience through the curriculum and pastoral support.

4. Risk Assessment and Protective Factors

Our risk assessment evaluates both school-wide and individual factors. We consider the diversity of our student body, varying family backgrounds, disrupted education histories, and the potential for previous exposure to extremist influences.

We balance these risks with protective factors embedded throughout our provision. Strong therapeutic relationships with staff in a 1:1 setting create safe spaces for students to explore controversial topics and express concerns. Regular mental health support, individualised support plans, structured online safety education, and close behavioural monitoring enable the early identification of concerning changes.

5. Staff Responsibilities

All staff must

- Understand the vulnerability factors specific to SEMH students.
- Complete Prevent training during induction and annually.
- Be aware of the signs of radicalisation.
- Know how to report concerns.
- Build trust that enables students to share worries.
- Promote British values naturally within teaching.
- Monitor changes in behaviour, views or online activity.
- Challenge extremist views appropriately.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Act as the Prevent single point of contact (SPOC).
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training.
- Assess concerns and make referrals when necessary.
- Maintain records of concerns and actions.
- Ensure the curriculum addresses extremism and radicalisation.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

Senior Leadership

- Ensure the policy is implemented.

- Allocate appropriate resources.
- Review and update risk assessments.
- Ensure safe IT policies and filtering.

6. Recognising Warning Signs

Staff should monitor for the following changes, always considered against the student's individual SEMH baseline.

Emotional and behavioural

- Increased anger or aggression beyond usual presentation
- New secretiveness about online activity
- Withdrawal from therapeutic relationships
- Expressing feelings of injustice or persecution
- Sudden disengagement from interests
- New interest in extremist materials or groups

Views and language

- Expressing extremist views or support for violent action
- Using extremist vocabulary or hate speech
- Dehumanising language about specific groups
- Conspiracy theories becoming dominant thinking
- Rejection of previously accepted support

Social changes

- New peer groups with concerning influences
- Isolation from family beyond existing relationships
- Attempting to recruit others to causes
- Accessing extremist material online

Important: single signs rarely indicate radicalisation, and many overlap with typical SEMH presentations. Always consider changes against the student's individual baseline, and approach safeguarding holistically.

7. Online Safety

Given our students' vulnerabilities and their 1:1 technology use, our protective measures include:

- Robust filtering and monitoring systems
- Direct supervision during all internet use, with staff able to see the student's laptop screen at all times
- Pre-checked educational resources
- Age-appropriate online safety education

- Regular reviews of search history
- Restricted social media access

Our online safety education focuses on:

- Critical thinking about online content
- Understanding grooming techniques
- Recognising fake news, misinformation and propaganda
- Safe ways to explore identity and belonging
- Where to get help with concerning content

8. Curriculum and Educational Approaches

Our curriculum systematically builds resilience against extremist ideologies through age-appropriate exploration of British values, democracy and diversity. PSHE and RSE programmes explicitly address extremism and radicalisation, developing the critical thinking skills that enable students to evaluate information and resist manipulation.

The one-to-one teaching model enables highly personalised approaches, with content tailored to each student's developmental level and specific vulnerabilities. Teachers create safe spaces for difficult questions, exploring identity, belonging and belief systems in ways that build resilience against extremist narratives while addressing specific SEMH needs.

9. Response Procedures

Step 1: Initial concern

- A staff member notices concerning signs.
- Discuss with the DSL immediately.
- Do not investigate independently.
- Record concerns on the safeguarding system.
- Maintain a normal, supportive relationship with the student.

Step 2: Assessment

- The DSL gathers information.
- Considers context and SEMH needs.
- Consults external agencies if needed.
- Decides on appropriate action and documents the decision-making.

Step 3: Action

Options include:

- Increased monitoring and support
- Discussion with parents and carers
- An Early Help assessment
- Referral to the Channel programme

- Referral to Children's Social Care
- Contact with the Counter Terrorism Unit (urgent cases)

Step 4: Support

- Continue therapeutic relationships.
- Address underlying vulnerabilities.
- Provide targeted intervention.
- Monitor and review regularly.
- Maintain confidentiality appropriately.

10. The Channel Programme

Channel is a voluntary, confidential programme providing support before any illegal activity occurs. Referrals are considered when students show engagement with extremist groups or materials, express extremist views, or demonstrate significant behavioural changes suggesting a risk of radicalisation.

The process involves an initial assessment by the Channel panel, seeking consent from individuals and parents, developing multi-agency support plans where appropriate, and regular reviews until risks are sufficiently reduced. Throughout Channel involvement, we maintain our therapeutic support and continue addressing underlying SEMH needs.

11. Working with Parents and Carers

Family engagement is a crucial part of our Prevent strategy. We share this policy with all families and include Prevent awareness in safeguarding discussions. We provide guidance on recognising warning signs at home and supporting online safety, working collaboratively when concerns arise.

When concerns emerge, we work with families to understand contextual factors and develop coordinated responses, including joint strategies for addressing vulnerabilities and monitoring online activity, while maintaining sensitivity to diverse family beliefs and values. Where family factors may contribute to risks, we provide appropriate support while keeping student safety as our paramount concern.

12. Staff Training

All staff receive:

- Prevent awareness training at induction, with annual updates and refreshers
- SEMH-specific vulnerability training
- Online safety training
- British values integration training
- Regular safeguarding updates

The DSL receives:

- Enhanced Prevent training

- Channel awareness training
- Local threat and risk briefings
- Multi-agency training opportunities

13. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis.
- Consent is sought where possible.
- Information may be shared without consent if there is a risk of harm.
- Records are kept secure and confidential, in compliance with UK GDPR.
- Student safety is paramount over confidentiality.

14. Quality Assurance

We monitor the effectiveness of this policy through:

- Annual policy review
- Staff training records
- Incident analysis and pattern identification
- Curriculum coverage audits
- Student voice feedback
- Local authority reviews