**Briefing note for school staff and governors about ‘Prevent’**

**September 2015**

‘Prevent’ relates to the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which came into force on 1 July 2015. Since July 1 2015 there has been a duty on schools - and other agencies - to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’. This is called the Prevent duty.

Prevent is part of the Government’s counter terrorism strategy. Its aim is to stop more people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism in all its forms. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of the schools’ wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse.

The statutory Prevent guidance summarises the requirements on schools in terms of four general themes:

* Risk assessment – schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism.
* Working in partnership – the Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements.
* IT policies – schools must ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school.
* Staff training – the Prevent 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.

All staff should be trained, by a Home Office accredited trainer, using the ‘Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent’ (WRAP) materials. The LA will be offering WRAP training – commencing November 2015. Until then staff and governors should read the information about preventing radicalisation in Part one of ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ **July** 2015 and be aware of the following:

**1) What is radicalisation?**

‘Radicalisation’ refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Importantly - during that process it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being drawn into terrorist-related activity.

**2) What is extremism?**

This is defined in the Government 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’.

Please note that being drawn into terrorism includes not only violent extremism but also non-violent extremism. Extremism can take several forms, including Islamist extremism, far-right (white supremacist) and animal rights extremism, for example.

**3) What are British Values?**

‘Democracy, the rule of law, equality of opportunity, freedom of speech and the rights for all men and women to live free from persecution of any kind’.

Schools are expected to encourage pupils to respect other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation).

Schools can build pupils’ resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that the Prevent duty is *not* intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, each school should provide a safe place in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.

**4) What action should staff take if they are worried that a child or young person might be drawn into extremism?**

The school has a child protection policy in place to safeguard children and that includes protecting children at risk of radicalisation. All staff should be aware of the child protection policy and follow it for any aspect of safeguarding, including extremist views/extremism.

As with any concern about a child a member of staff should in the first instance inform their Designated Safeguarding Lead.

More information:

* ‘Prevent policy’ - Section 1.3.31 Pan-Dorset Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures (on the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website)
* ‘The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers’, DFE June 2015