



Extremism and Radicalisation Procedure British Forces Germany

Procedure Overview

All agencies have a duty and a responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children and young people. Agencies will therefore take appropriate action if they become concerned that a child or young person may be displaying extremist views or behaviour, or may be at risk of radicalisation.

This procedure sets out the responsibilities of all agencies, and also offers guidance to assist agencies in identifying when to be concerned.

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Purpose/Objectives

This procedure sets out the responsibilities of all Agencies, to safeguard children and young people at risk from extremism and radicalisation. It provides guidance about how any agency can support parents/carers in keeping children safe from extremism and radicalisation. It provides information about indicators of risk, and how to respond to concerns.

This procedure forms part of the wider suite of Safeguarding Board procedures, which include procedures about how to respond to the risk of child sexual exploitation and what to do if you suspect a child is being harmed, amongst others.

Scope

This procedure applies to all those working with children, young people and families in British Forces Germany, European Joint Support Unit, British Army training Unit Kenya, British Army Training Unit Suffield and British Army Training Sub Unit Belize. This procedure is intended to raise awareness about extremism and radicalisation and assist professionals who work with children, young people and families in decision making when they become aware that a child or young person is at risk of extremism and radicalisation.

Areas of Responsibility

Although BFG is not a 'specified authority' as per Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Schedule 6), they will still maintain the duty to work in ways that prevent people, including children and young people, from being drawn into terrorism.

The procedure applies to all Agencies. Agencies are responsible for ensuring that the procedure is adhered to operationally and will ensure that all persons comply with the operation of this procedure.

Introduction to Extremism and Radicalisation

It is rare for children and young people to become involved in violent extremism. Most people, even those who hold extreme views, do not become involved in violent extremism. However, the current threat to the United Kingdom from terrorism can involve the exploitation of vulnerable people, including children and young people to involve them in terrorism or activity in support of terrorism.

This procedure is not written with the aim of 'spotting terrorists' but rather to help those working with children, young people and families and parents/carers to feel comfortable in discussing difficult issues with children and young people in knowing what to be concerned about, and knowing where to get advice and guidance. Agencies need to support families and professionals in recognising concerns, seeking advice and promoting protective factors to prevent children and young people being radicalised.

What are Radicalisation and Extremism?

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. *(HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011)*

Extremism 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. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas (HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011)

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."*

Keeping children and young people safe from these risks is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as safeguarding children and young people from other risks. Children and young people should be protected from messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

What are 'Contest' and 'Prevent'?

CONTEST is the United Kingdom's counter-terrorism strategy. The aim of Contest is to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence.

Contest has four main work streams:

- **Pursue:** to stop terrorist attacks;
 - **Prevent:** to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;
 - **Protect:** to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack; and
- Prepare:** to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

The UK Government Prevent Strategy (Within the UK):

- Responds to the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views.
- Provides practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.
- Works with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, online and health) where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to deal with.

While there is no equivalent to the Prevent Strategy in place within the BFG SB sphere of responsibility all Agencies have a duty to work within the spirit of the Prevent Strategy and contribute to the Prevent Agenda and therefore must comply with all parts of this procedure.

Identification

There is no such thing as a typical extremist, and young people that become involved in extremism come from a variety of backgrounds. However, research can help us to identify factors that can contribute to young people

becoming involved in extremism and becoming radicalised. It also tells us what factors may help to prevent young people being drawn into this way of thinking and acting, and what we can do to protect them.

Caution must be applied when considering these identifying factors, as it is important not to inappropriately label or stigmatise young people. Always seek advice from your manager when you have concerns about any of the following factors, which *may* be indicators of a young person becoming radicalised or extreme in their views¹:

- A conviction that their religion, culture or beliefs are under threat and treated unjustly.
- A tendency to look for conspiracy theories and distrust of mainstream media.
- The need for identity and belonging.
- Being secretive about who they've been talking to online and what sites they visit.
- Switching screens when you come near the phone, tablet or computer.
- Possessing items – electronic devices or phones – you haven't given them.
- Becoming emotionally volatile.

Other indicators of vulnerability can include:

- Identity Crisis - Distance from cultural / religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them.
- Personal Crisis - Family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Personal Circumstances - Migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations - Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
- Criminality - Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/reintegration; previous involvement with criminal groups.

Several of these risk factors apply to many teenagers; especially those that are not living with their birth families, or who live at a distance from their home and friends and therefore caution must be applied when considering the risks of extremism. They may be indicators of other risks, such as sexual exploitation, or mental health issues for example, and should be considered alongside all the other issues and factors for the young person.

Some of the more critical indicators of extremism could be:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters.
- Articulating support for violent extremist causes or leaders.
- 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.

¹ Internet Matters.Org - [The radicalisation of young children online | Internet Matters](#)

- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour.

Children and young people could be drawn into extremism through their contact with family members. They could be influenced by friends or contact with extremist groups; sometimes via social media. This can put a young person at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to lead to the child or young person suffering significant harm.

Extremist groups could use a process of 'grooming' a young person, to draw them away from people that may challenge extremist views, such as their foster carers or other friends. Young people are sometimes targeted because they are vulnerable, and as this is, in the main, the cohort of young people with whom support services often come in contact with; extra vigilance is necessary. The risk of radicalisation can develop over time and may relate to a number of factors in the child's life. Identifying the risks requires practitioners working with children, young people and families to exercise their professional judgement and to seek further advice as necessary. The risk may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified.

On-line content, in particular social media, may pose a specific risk in normalising radical views and promoting content that is shocking and extreme; children can be trusting and naive and may not necessarily appreciate bias, which can lead to being drawn into such groups and to adopt their extremist views.

Recent case evidence within the UK indicates that specific groups such as young Muslim women have been targeted for radicalisation and grooming, which has led to attempts to travel to the Middle East placing them at risk.

Responding to Extremism and Radicalisation

What must you do?

The risks posed to children and young people by extremism are now included within the criteria for determining whether children and young people are in need of early help, specialist support or protection.

“Safeguarding children and young people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm” - The Prevent Strategy 2011

Children and Young People at risk of Extremism and Radicalisation need to be safeguarded. Anyone who is concerned that a young person poses an immediate danger to themselves or any other person, must call the police without delay.

Anyone who has information that a child or young person is potentially or actually at risk of significant harm should inform the BFSWS Central Referral Team or the police. An assessment of the risks to the child or young person will then be undertaken.

If concern has not reached the threshold of immediate danger or significant harm then in the first instance concerns should be discussed with Agencies' Safeguarding Leads or a Senior Colleague and a decision can be made to whether to consider an Early Help response or to contact the BFSWS Central Referral Team to consult/make a referral.

Whilst British Forces Germany is not a 'specified authority' as per Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Schedule 6), all Agencies working with children, young people and families still have a duty to work in ways that prevent people, including children and young people from being drawn into terrorism.

You must:

- Know how to identify children at risk of extremism and/or radicalisation and how to intervene as appropriate.
- Know and follow the BFG Safeguarding Board Procedures about extremism and radicalisation.
- Identify any concerns or risks known about a child or young person prior to discussing these with your Safeguarding Lead and making a referral to the BFSWS Central Referral Team.
- Be aware of the sensitive and complex nature of extremism and radicalisation. Families may not be aware that a child or young person is at risk of extremism and radicalisation and in all other ways provide a loving environment.
- Ensure the parent/carer knows of the risks, warning signs, and their role in keeping the child safe from accessing/exposure to terrorist and extremist materials and to discuss and share any concerns appropriately.
- Seek advice if there are concerns that a child may be developing extremist views, or becoming radicalised. In the first instance this advice will be from your Safeguarding Lead who can seek advice from the BFSWS Central Referral Team.

The following advice is useful to follow when working with a child or young person who you believe is at risk of extremism and radicalisation:

- Be approachable.
- Let them know you're there to help them if they get into trouble online – and if they're concerned about something they can come to you.
- Be calm and don't panic. Children and young people are far more likely to be open and honest with you if you remain calm about the situation.
- Tell someone – seek immediate advice from your Safeguarding Lead/BFSWS Central Referral Team.
- Make sure children and young people are aware that if something has worried them or made them uncomfortable online their best course of action is always to talk to an adult they trust.
- Talk to them about their online friendships.
- Find out what sites they go to, where they met their online friends, how they communicate and what information they share. Talk to them about being cautious about what they share with people online. Remind them that even though people they've met online might feel like friends they may not be who they say they are, and that they may have ulterior motives for befriending them.
- Children's and Young People's beliefs are a sensitive subject and need handling carefully as you don't want to push them away or shut them out.
- Make sure children and young people are safe in real life.
- Remind children and young people to never arrange to meet someone they only know online without a trusted adult present.
- Encourage children and young people to share their ideas and opinions.
- Many children and young people are often not aware of the realities and consequences of the radical ideas they have formed or the arguments against them.

Additional Guidance

Summary of all recent UK Government guidance and legislation about terrorism and extremism: [2010 to 2015 government policy: counter-terrorism - GOV.UK](#)

Guidance for Ofsted inspectors when inspecting independent fostering agencies – Annex F sets out expectations in relation to extremism: [Inspecting independent fostering agencies: guidance for inspectors - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

Prevent Duty Guidance: [Prevent duty guidance - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

[UK - Safer Internet Centre](#) – advice about online extremism and all aspects of online safety

If you are concerned about extremism in a school or organisation that works with children, or if you think a child might be at risk of extremism, you can contact the Government Helpline: Preventing extremism in schools and children's services for advice. Email counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk Telephone 0044 (0) 20 7340 7264.

Appendix One:

Definitions and Abbreviations

CONTEST - the United Kingdom's counter-terrorism strategy. It has four strands; **Pursue**: to stop terrorist attacks; **Prevent**: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism; **Protect**: to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack; and **Prepare**: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

CHANNEL - Channel is part of the Prevent strategy. The process is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.²

Online Radicalisation - a process whereby individuals through their online interactions and exposures to various types of internet content, come to view violence as a legitimate method of solving social and political conflicts.³

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Terrorism - 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 (UK Terrorism Act 2000: www.legislation.gov.uk)

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation (such as radicalisation). Children can be groomed online or in the 'real world', by strangers or people they know. Read more about grooming - [What is grooming | NSPCC](#)

² (HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011)

³ (Birmingham, Adam, Maura Conway, Lisa McInerney, Neil O'Hare and Alan F. Smeaton, 'Combining Social Network Analysis and Sentiment Analysis to Explore the Potential for Online Radicalisation'. Paper presented at the Advances in Social Networks Analysis and Mining Conference, Athens, Greece, 20–22 July, 2009.)

BFG SB – The British Forces Germany Safeguarding Board. The BFG SB provides multi-agency procedures that all agencies must follow. This includes procedures about extremism and radicalisation, and how to refer to relevant agencies when you have concerns.

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