Learning Together to be Safe

A toolkit to help colleges contribute to the prevention of violent extremism

department for
children, schools and families

AoC
Association of Colleges

BIS
Department for
Business
Innovation
& Skills

Contents

Introduction

In February 2008, the Government published guidance to local partners on preventing violent extremism that emphasised the importance of working with children and young people and encouraged local partnerships to engage with schools and colleges. This toolkit supplements that guidance, responding to calls for more practical advice specifically focused on the education context. It is the product of discussions with young people, teachers, local authorities, police and community representatives across the country.

This toolkit seeks to:

- raise **awareness** amongst colleges of the threat from violent extremist groups and the risks for young people;

- provide **information** about what can cause violent extremism, about preventative actions taking place locally and nationally and about where colleges can get additional information and advice;

- help colleges understand the **positive contribution** they can make to empowering young people to create communities that are more resilient to extremism, and **protecting the well-being** of particular students or groups who may be vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremist activity;

- provide advice on **managing risks** and responding to incidents locally, nationally or internationally that might have an impact on the college community.

The purpose throughout is to support the confidence and capacity of staff and to encourage local partnership working.

The following key objectives are taken from the consultation document issued by the Association of Colleges and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills published in February 2008: The Role of Further Education Providers in Promoting Community Cohesion, Fostering Shared Values and Preventing Violent Extremism: Consultation Document.

Key objectives

1 To promote and reinforce shared values; to create space for free and open debate; and to listen to and support mainstream voices.

2 To break down segregation amongst different student/learner communities including by supporting inter–faith and inter–cultural dialogue and understanding and to engage all students/learners in playing a full and active role in wider engagement in society.

3 To ensure student/learner safety and colleges that are free from bullying, harassment and intimidation.

4 To provide support for students/learners who may be at risk and appropriate sources of advice and guidance.

5 To ensure that students/learners and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing violent extremism.

"The effects of terrorism and violent extremism have an impact on everyone in society, including young people. Young people from all backgrounds need to be empowered to discuss matters relating to terrorism and preventing violent extremism on their own terms.

"We need more support for teachers who are dealing with such sensitive subjects. As a Muslim myself, to deal with extremism, we have to incorporate all faiths in these discussions. Teachers should be given support and materials which they can use to achieve this."

Usman Nawaz, aged 18, Member UK Youth Parliament for Rochdale

This toolkit complements similar guidance aimed at schools and issued in October 2008.

Aims of the toolkit

Who the toolkit is for

This toolkit is for all general Further Education and Sixth Form colleges in England. A version is also available for schools.

The nature and extent of the threat from violent extremism will vary across the country. However all communities are affected, whether directly or indirectly, and in an increasingly interconnected world it is important that young people are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need for the future regardless of where they go to college. It is therefore important that **all** colleges are aware of the issues and consider what actions are appropriate, in conjunction with local partners.

In a **college context** the five strands are to:

1 understand how an extremist **narrative** which can lead to harm can be challenged by staff in colleges; staff and other students can model to students how diverse views can be heard, analysed and challenged in a way which values freedom of speech and freedom from harm;

2 understand how to **prevent harm** to students by individuals, groups or others who promote violent extremism in colleges and communities, and manage risks within the college and respond to specific local or national incidents;

3 understand how to **support individuals** who are vulnerable – strategies to support, challenge and protect;

4 increase the **resilience of students and of college communities** – through helping students acquire skills and knowledge to challenge extremist views, and promoting an ethos and values that promote respect for others;

5 use teaching styles and curriculum opportunities which allow perceived **grievances** to be aired, explored and demonstrate the role of conflict resolution and active citizenship.
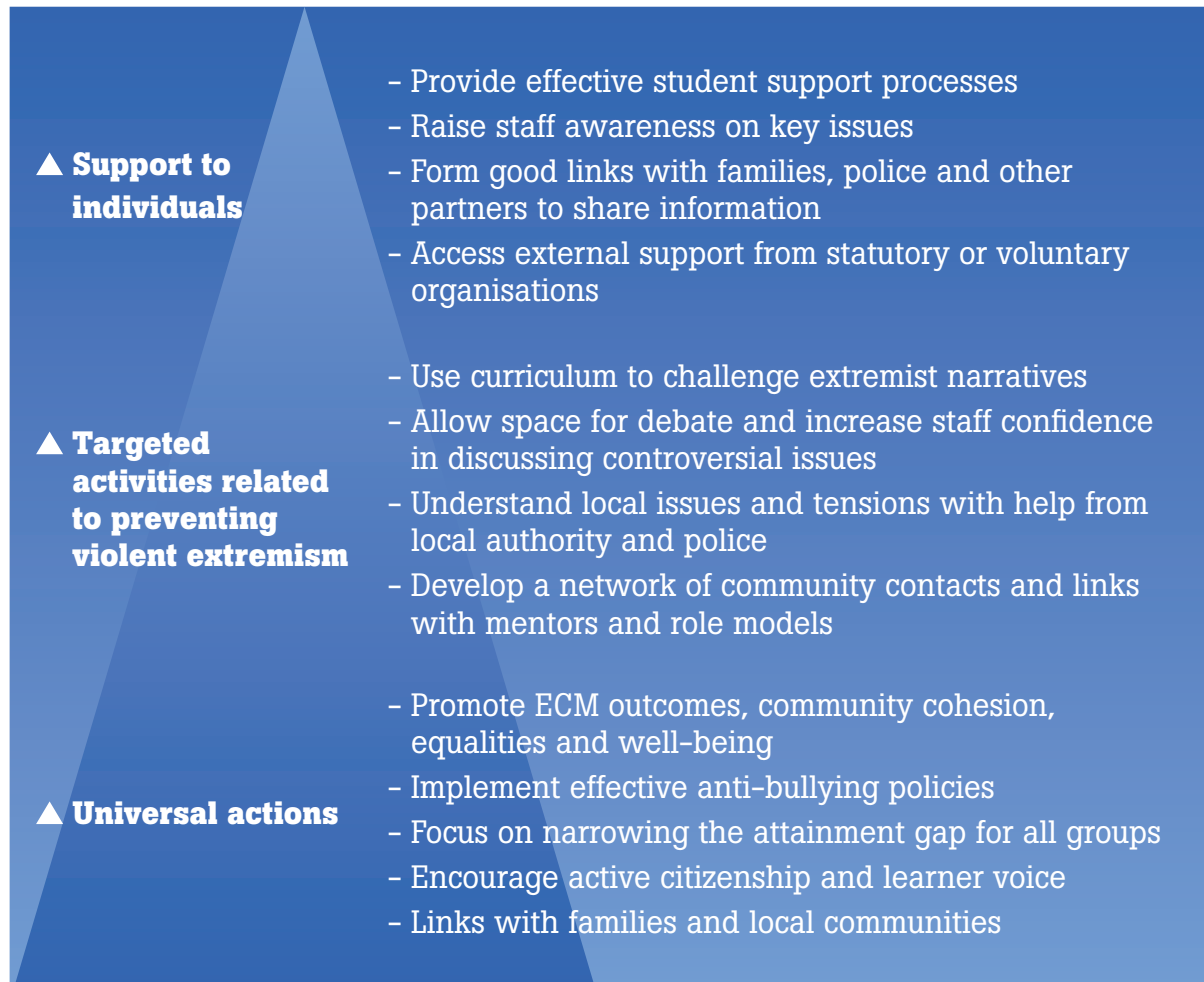
Colleges will already be contributing to the goal of preventing violent extremism. For example, colleges can build on work they already do in:

■ promoting the Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes for all students;

■ promoting student well–being, equalities and community cohesion;

■ building the resilience of the college, working with partners, to prevent students becoming the victims or causes of harm;

■ working with other agencies and building community networks of support for the college.

The toolkit provides practical advice to colleges in five areas. These are:

1 Understanding the issues

2 Leadership and values

3 Teaching, learning and the curriculum

4 Student support and challenge

5 Managing risk and responding to events

A tiered approach:

▲ **Support to individuals**

– Provide effective student support processes
– Raise staff awareness on key issues
– Form good links with families, police and other partners to share information
– Access external support from statutory or voluntary organisations

▲ **Targeted activities related to preventing violent extremism**

– Use curriculum to challenge extremist narratives
– Allow space for debate and increase staff confidence in discussing controversial issues
– Understand local issues and tensions with help from local authority and police
– Develop a network of community contacts and links with mentors and role models

▲ **Universal actions**

– Promote ECM outcomes, community cohesion, equalities and well–being
– Implement effective anti–bullying policies
– Focus on narrowing the attainment gap for all groups
– Encourage active citizenship and learner voice
– Links with families and local communities

1 Understanding the issues

This section addresses the need for colleges:

- to understand the nature of the threats (at a local and national level);

- to be aware of the activities happening locally and nationally to prevent violent extremism and how colleges can contribute;

- to understand how the experiences faced by some students, families and communities may contribute to the process of radicalisation and support for extreme violence.

Understanding the threat nationally and locally

National threats

The Government assesses that the UK is a high priority target for international terrorists aligned with Al–Qaida and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. In practice this means a threat from British nationals and UK–based terrorists as well as from foreign terrorists planning attacks from abroad.

The majority of violent extremist networks are located in major urban conurbations such as London, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. However recent arrests in Bristol and Exeter also demonstrate that violent extremists are widely distributed across the UK.

Experience suggests there is no typical profile of UK–based violent extremists influenced by Al–Qaida. They can come from a range of geographical areas, from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and include a number of converts to Islam. The nature of support for violent extremist activity varies but can include radicalising others, training, fundraising and procurement of support for terrorist activities. Training can include outward bound type courses to encourage bonding either in the UK or in camps operated by Al–Qaida overseas.

In addition to the severe threat posed by Al–Qaida influenced groups, dissident Irish republican terrorist groups who oppose the Northern Ireland peace process still pose a threat to British interests. Other UK–based extremist groups including racist and fascist organisations and far right extremist groups also pose a threat to public order and the British multicultural way of life. These groups often aspire to campaigns of violence against individuals, families and particular communities and, if unchecked, may provide a catalyst for alienation and disaffection within particular ethnic communities. Evidence suggests that the route to violent far right extremism often begins with organisations seeking to recruit young people and even arranging specific training activities that include encouraging the use of guns and knives.

The Security Service's appraisal of terrorist threats currently facing the UK can be found at: www.mi5.gov.uk/output/terrorism.html

A list of the groups or movements that espouse the use of violence and meet the conditions for being banned – proscribed – under terrorism legislation, is at: http://security.homeoffice.gov.uk/legislation/current-legislation/terrorism-act–2000/proscribed–groups

"As a country, we are rightly concerned to protect children and young people from exploitation in other areas. We need to do the same in relation to violent extremism. As I speak, terrorists are methodically and intentionally targeting young people and children in this country. They are radicalising, indoctrinating and grooming young, vulnerable people to carry out acts of terrorism. This year, we have seen individuals as young as 15 and 16 implicated in terrorist-related activity."

Director General of the Security Service, Speech to the Society of Editors' Annual Conference, 5 November 2007

The local picture

The challenge from violent extremism and activities of different groups will vary across the country. It is important that colleges understand and keep up to date with specific local issues affecting their communities. Local authorities and police will be able to help colleges gain an overview of current local issues.

Colleges can also help local authorities and police understand tensions affecting their students. Colleges will observe or hear how communities are **feeling**, may witness an **event** that has happened, or be aware that something **might happen**. In all these three types of situation, information from colleges is important to help the local authority or police gain a whole community view and so protect young people from harm or causing harm.

Colleges, in conjunction with local authorities, the police and other agencies, should **agree appropriate mechanisms for sharing information** relating to threats or community tensions. This could be as part of existing local tension monitoring arrangements. As part of this, colleges should ensure they are fulfilling their statutory duty **to record and report racist incidents**.

i – Local information available

What is the Government doing to prevent violent extremism?

The Government has a '**Prevent**' strategy as part of its overall approach to countering terrorism with the aim of **preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism**.

The Prevent strategy has five strands designed to address the factors that research suggests can cause people to become involved in Al-Qaida associated violent extremism. The five strands of the strategy are:

- **challenging** the violent extremist ideology and supporting mainstream voices;

- **disrupting** those who promote violent extremism and supporting institutions where they may be active;

- **supporting individuals** who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism;

- increasing the **resilience** of communities to violent extremism;

- **addressing grievances**, both genuine and perceived, that ideologues are exploiting. These can stem from national or international issues – for example relating to foreign policy, or perceptions of distorted media representation, or be based on local perceptions of inequality or experiences of racism or community conflict.

Activities are taking place at a local, national and international level under each of the strands, in partnership with community organisations. Many of these activities are focused on working with young people. More detail is available in guidance to local partners published in February 2008:
http://security.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-publications/publication-search/prevent-strategy/

In addition to the Prevent strategy, there is a range of policies, locally and nationally, to tackle racism and inequalities and to promote cohesion and inter-faith relations. These include activities to prevent young people from joining far right organisations, often falling under the umbrella of preventing hate crime.

> *"A strong civil society is one that is not afraid to critique but which has people with the skills and dispositions to engage in this without violence."*
>
> *Professor Lynn Davies, 'Educating Against Extremism', Trentham Books, 2008*

Roles of local agencies and partners

The February 2008 guidance encourages local areas to have a preventing violent extremism action plan with activities across all five strands of the strategy. These will involve a range of partners led by the local authority, the police and other statutory and voluntary agencies and include the active involvement of local communities. The range of activities will vary depending on the scale of the challenges in the local area.

All local authorities are monitored against a 'National Indicator' measure of their activity to "build resilience to violent extremism", including the extent of their partnership working. Some local authorities have included this as one of their priority indicators in their Local Area Agreements (LAA).

Colleges should be included in local partnership working on the prevention of violent extremism and on promoting community cohesion. Local authorities, the police and other partners can also be a source of support and advice for colleges on issues concerning extremism and engagement with local community organisations.

i – Local information available

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Violent extremism – key points

■ **Extremists use persuasive narratives to attract people to their cause**, based on a particular interpretation or distortion of history, politics or religion. Education can play a powerful role in encouraging young people to challenge ideas, think for themselves and take responsibility for their actions.

■ **There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism, or single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas**. The starting point for colleges, as in all learning, is knowing their students, listening and responding to their changing needs. If members of staff do have concerns about behaviour patterns, they should seek advice from other partners and use their professional judgement to consider whether a young person might be at risk. To this end, colleges should have in place appropriate procedures for members of staff to raise such concerns, perhaps including a designated individual to liaise with partners.

■ **The particular risks to students and for college communities from extremist groups will vary across the country**. Colleges should seek advice from their local authorities and the police (via their college liaison police officer or safer neighbourhood team) on their local context and make sure mechanisms are in place to keep abreast of local issues.

■ **There will be a range of activities taking place in local areas** aimed at the prevention of violent extremism which may be relevant to colleges or the college community. Local authorities can help individual colleges to become involved in local partnership working and understand what resources and projects are available locally.

2 Leadership and values

This sets out practical advice on how colleges can contribute to preventing violent extremism through:

- specific **leadership roles** including developing **local partnerships**;
- a **values–based** approach.

Further Education colleges are typically leaders in their community. Not just in education but as institutions that can drive economic development and regeneration through their presence, participation and leadership. While their core role is to develop the talent and innovation capacity of this country, the focus must extend beyond the purely vocational and include the ability to engage with the social challenges our society faces.

This brings a responsibility for colleges to engage with some of the more challenging aspects of community life. In some areas, this can include working with communities to develop resilience to those ideologies that promote hatred and violence.

Underpinning the ethos of a college which plays a positive role in preventing violent extremism are **specific values and leadership strategies**.

These should be developed, understood and shared by leaders at all levels in the college – governors, the senior leadership team and all staff in their leadership roles – and then made explicit to students, parents and the community served by the college. The learner voice, parent and community engagement processes of the college can inform college improvement planning, self–evaluation and policy review.

In preventing violent extremism college leaders need to:

i) Uphold a clear ethos which:

	Possible college actions
– is based on the promotion of human rights, equalities and freedoms under the law	– *creating explicit value statements that are inclusive of all students* – *reviewing curriculum and student participation and support processes*
– promotes critical scholarship and informed moral purpose in engaging students with local, national and international issues and grievances	– *developing critical personal thinking skills and using curriculum opportunities including small group work*
– recognises and meets the social and emotional learning needs of students and staff	– *developing an emotional literacy agenda in tutorials*
– promotes a shared culture of openness and pluralism in the college and with the wider community, regardless of the specific status, location or faith affiliation of the college	– *exploring and promoting the diversity and shared values between and within communities* – *challenging Islamophobia, anti–Semitism or other prejudices*
– promotes a strong sense of belonging, shared community care and responsibility for others	– *focusing support on those at risk of being isolated* – *building ties with all local communities, seeking opportunities for linking with schools and other colleges*

	Possible college actions
– challenges any behaviours which harm the ability of individuals and groups to work together and models ways to recognise grievance and repair harm	– *using anti-bullying strategies to minimise hate and prejudice–based bullying* – *using restorative approaches to repair harm caused*

College action: evaluate the evidence which would demonstrate to students, staff and the community the college's commitment to these principles.

ii) Promote the core values of a democratic society and model the processes by:

– upholding the right to equality under the law by people regardless of gender, age, race, belief, class, ability or disability, sexual orientation	– *including clear statements in the induction of students, staff, governors and in the curriculum*
– promoting the use of due processes to resolve disagreement and to protect the vulnerable	– *ensuring fair processes which protect those harmed or affected*
– modelling participatory and representative democracy by engaging and examining views expressed	– *modelling freedom of speech through learner participation strategies, while ensuring protection of vulnerable students and promoting critical analysis of evidence*

	Possible college actions
– modelling positive problem solving	– *promoting active citizenship to model how perceived injustice can be peacefully challenged* – *developing restorative approaches to resolve personal conflicts and so repair harm caused*

College action: review the policies and practice for students and staff which encompass democratic values.

iii) Build staff understanding of their roles and confidence in their skills:

– to build staff awareness of local issues	– *reviewing routines for briefing and engaging staff and governors on local issues*
– to provide the safe place for discussion which can deal with grievances	– *developing teaching skills for dealing with controversial issues* – *providing opportunities for small group supported discussion*

	Possible college actions
– to promote the well–being of students including when vulnerable to group pressures linked to violent extremism	– *raising awareness amongst staff of student support processes* – *enforcing safe behaviours in the use of the internet*
– to play relevant roles in targeted and specialist provision	– *ensuring relevant staff are engaged in linking with local provision*
– in responding to events which affect the college, students or local communities	– *promoting opportunities for informed discussion* – *directing students and staff to sources of help*

College action: review professional development needs for staff to build capacity for preventing violent extremism.

iv) Deepen engagement with the communities the college serves by:

– openness to hearing and understanding tensions within the communities served by the college	– *promoting ways for students, staff and parents and others to channel concerns to those who can help*

	Possible college actions
– being an active partner in community leadership (with other college leaders, statutory agencies and with community groups)	– *reviewing how the college and local authority partners are engaged in support for different communities* – *developing links with local faith communities and supplementary colleges* – *seek to be represented on local Prevent partnerships*
– encouraging students as citizens to support the vulnerable and to use democratic and lawful vehicles for protest	– *modelling how students can express their views, for example on media coverage of local or national issues, or through involvement with local decision making processes*
– respectful engagement with families and community groups which also, when necessary, challenges unacceptable views and models ways to solve problems	– *developing college partnership in understanding of community issues and finding respectful ways to promote college values to local communities*

College action: evaluate and develop processes for community engagement by the college – especially with communities that may be vulnerable because of prejudice or where there are communication barriers.

In contributing to the prevention of violent extremism, college leaders should work in **partnership** with other schools and colleges, the local authority and other agencies, including the police:

■ to understand local issues, share knowledge about support and prevention;

■ for specific teaching and learning activities and professional development strategies;

■ for individual case support, safeguarding, prevention programmes, family strategies, community safety and tension monitoring.

College action: evaluate college links with local partners and agencies and ensure contact points for advice and support are clearly identified.

3 Teaching, learning and the curriculum

This section sets out how colleges can contribute to preventing violent extremism through:

- a **curriculum** which is adapted to recognise local needs, challenge extremist narratives and promote universal rights;

- **teaching and learning strategies** which explore controversial issues in a way which promotes critical analysis and pro-social values;

- the use of **external programmes or groups** to support learning while ensuring that the input supports the college goals and values.

In using teaching, learning and the curriculum to build resilience to violent extremism, colleges can build on what they already do to:

- use naturally occurring opportunities within vocational and academic courses to create student knowledge and to challenge information prejudices;

- help students to develop the skills needed to evaluate effectively and discuss potentially controversial issues;

- use spaces for students to discuss openly issues that concern them, including exploring their own identities and how these relate to the diversity of the society in which they live;

- provide opportunities for students to understand, meet and engage with people from different backgrounds in ways which promote the common values while recognising diversity of values within communities;

- provide fact sheets that challenge distributed information on race, gender, religion.

Violent extremists use narratives that mix fact or selected fact with assertions, subjective opinion and emotion to justify their actions and promote violence. Violent extremist narrative does not allow for alternative interpretations and denies contradictory factual evidence or analysis.

Violent extremism, and racial or hate-driven discrimination of all forms, also relies on sustaining and exaggerating divisions in society, often by exploiting people's fears or lack of understanding of others.

Education in a democracy should encourage each issue to be critically discussed and debated on its own merits with proper intellectual and ethical rigour. It should also promote the rights of citizens to lawful protest.

The curriculum

The core aim of the curriculum is to produce students who are:

- **responsible citizens** – which includes understanding identity, valuing diversity, working co-operatively to promote positive change;

- **confident individuals** – which includes developing independence, self-awareness and moral judgements;

- **successful learners** – which includes developing enquiring minds, and engaging with the big issues of our world.

i) Cross-curricular dimensions

Three cross-curricular dimensions can contribute particularly to preventing violent extremism:

- **media and technology** – becoming critical users of media messages;

- **global dimension and sustainable development** – becoming global citizens;

- **identity and cultural diversity** – becoming comfortable with self identity in a plural community.

ii) Developing relevant skills

The development of personal, learning and thinking skills supports students in resisting the messages of violent extremists, in particular the skills of independent enquiry and effective participation:

- **independent enquirers** – evaluating evidence to take reasoned decisions while recognising the beliefs of others;
- **effective participators** – responsible participants to engage issues and help improve college and community.

College action: identify skills development needs and opportunities.

Possible examples:

– a cross-college focus on developing critical skills in managing harmful media and internet information about particular communities;

– a college theme to model how peaceful action has achieved results at local national or international levels.

Teaching and learning strategies

The Ajegbo report 'Identity and Diversity: A Curriculum Review' (DCSF 2007) highlighted that "engaging young people in sometimes controversial but deeply relevant issues will excite them, involve them, develop their thinking skills and both raise standards and make our country an even better place".

Effectively addressing controversial issues will also help to challenge misinformed views and perceptions amongst students, challenge commonly held myths and build understanding and appreciation about others. This requires:

- questioning techniques to open up safe debate;
- confidence to promote honesty about pluralist views;
- ensuring both freedom of expression and freedom from threat;
- debating fundamental moral and human rights principles;

- promoting open respectful dialogue;
- affirming the multiple dynamic identities we all have.

> **College action:** review staff confidence in the core approaches to dealing with controversial issues and define professional development needs.

Using external programmes and groups

Engaging with external speakers, programmes or groups can be an effective way of building awareness and skills of young people and encouraging debate. For example, theatre and drama productions are often a powerful stimulus for learning about controversial issues.

The **Khayaal Theatre Company's** production 'Hearts & Minds' is a theatre-in-education production for schools and colleges which aims to encapsulate some of the dilemmas and discourses occupying the hearts and minds of young Muslims, including issues of extremism:
www.khayaal.co.uk/

The **GW Theatre Company** production 'One Extreme to the Other', aimed at young people aged 14–25, includes a comprehensive multimedia follow-up package including a major website to inform further discussion and lead in good practice:
www.gwtheatre.com/

Which criteria should colleges use for selecting programmes or groups?

- What evidence is there to validate the approach used? This might be available from published evaluations, other colleges or the local authority.

■ Is the programme explicitly aligned with the values which the college promotes?

■ Is it clear how the preparation, activity and follow–up (including evaluation) will take place to ensure effective learning?

■ If using local groups to support learning around issues of politics, ethnicity or faith are the adults clear about the college expectations and, as needed, do they have CRB checks?

■ What follow–up personal or learning support is available for individuals or groups as needed?

College action: use customised local information and advice from other colleges, local authorities or other sources to identify local available groups who can engage with colleges.

i – Local information available

4 Student support and challenge

This section addresses how colleges can support the welfare of individuals and groups of students through:

- using normal college student support approaches but, when relevant, being confident to seek further support;

- using informed professional judgement to implement strategies in individual cases;

- drawing on wider support from the community and other local partners to work with individuals or groups of students.

Responsibilities

The professional standards for teachers, contractual and safeguarding frameworks for all adults working with children and young people, and the Every Child Matters outcomes for young people all require the exercise of a duty of care and, where necessary, the taking of actions for safeguarding and crime prevention. This includes challenging unacceptable behaviour such as racism or bullying that can impact on the well-being of individuals or groups of students.

Understanding what is happening

The starting point for colleges ensuring they are fulfilling their duty of care will be knowing their students and the wider community, and listening and responding to their changing needs, and supporting those who may be vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremist activity.

There are a number of signs or behaviours that colleges may come across that may cause staff concern and which would require them to use their professional judgement to determine whether a response is needed. Staff will need to take into consideration how **reliable** or **significant** signs are and whether there are **other factors** or issues that could indicate vulnerability.

What college staff might see or hear about:

- graffiti symbols, writing or artwork promoting extremist messages or images;

- students accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites;

- parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance;

- partner colleges, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting students in other colleges;

- students voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives;

- particular individuals or groups which espouse more rigid doctrinal/ ideological and adversarial views gaining ascendency in college societies or informal association;

- use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence.

Challenge and support processes

Responses could be **in-college actions** (for example removing hate-related graffiti, challenging views expressed through classroom discussion or supporting students through normal student welfare strategies) or **involve external agencies** to ascertain whether there are other risk factors to be taken into account and determine an appropriate support plan.

It may be that a student is facing multiple challenges in their life, of which exposure to extremist influences is just one. The college should contribute to a multi-agency assessment where appropriate in line with the local authority protocols.

Colleges may wish to identify a member of staff – this may be the designated member of staff for safeguarding – who can act as a source of advice for other members of staff and lead on engaging with external partners.

College action: review student support systems. Agree information sharing, support and challenge strategies locally with the multi-agency team.

Recent examples of concerns that have arisen in colleges:

– The college is approached by a group of students who find that the local mosques do not provide enough scope for them to discuss and debate particular topical issues that relate to religious ideology and how they can apply their understanding of their faith within the modern world. They want to set up a society where they can do this.

– The IT monitoring system has identified that an individual has been seeking to access an Arabic website that is not on the agreed list.

– You have a report that a student is upsetting other students by challenging their clothing as un-Islamic and encouraging them not to mix with non-Muslims.

Colleges may identify a need for specific support programmes for individuals or groups of students such as mentoring, or access to experts who can provide guidance on issues of faith. These could be within the college or in partnership with others – for example college 14–19 partnerships, other schools, local authority services, community partners, Youth Offending Teams, the police or other voluntary or statutory organisations.

The National Council for Faiths and Beliefs in FE (**fbfe**) has a team of Regional Development Officers (RDOs) that can work with colleges to help them develop their support for learners' spiritual and moral development, often through facilitating partnerships with local faith community groups.
www.fbfe.org.uk

i – Local information available

Barking and Dagenham project to support students at risk of joining far right organisations

The project worked with 40 young male students with attitudes which could be characterised as inward–looking, having a strong geographical identity and holding racist views. Mentors were used to provide role models and to assist young male students to develop positive responsible self–images.

Outcomes:

- a move away from extreme far right views;

- decrease in race/faith incidents;

- reduction in youth crime;

- improvement in community safety.

Problem solving and repairing harm

Support to meet individual or group needs is often well developed within a college. Students also need to be helped to develop techniques for personal support, resolving conflict and repairing harm.

Helping students and adults access support

Students, parents and families, college staff and other professionals engaging with colleges may need to have access to personal advice and understand who they can turn to for support in relation to preventing violent extremism issues.

College action: review problem solving and personal support available for students, staff and parents.

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5 Managing risk and responding to events

This section helps colleges:

■ to respond to events which could have an impact on the college community;

■ to ensure they are aware of and managing potential risks to students and the wider college community effectively.

Managing risks

Although there are very few instances of young people being exposed to extremist messages *within* colleges this is a risk of which colleges need to be aware. Risks could arise from:

■ harmful influences on students – for example from staff, parents, external groups or other students;

■ inappropriate use of ICT systems;

■ external groups using college premises.

Examples of legal and contractual powers that may be relevant to preventing violent extremism are set out at Annex 4.

Harmful influences on students

College staff, including temporary staff, may express views, bring material into the college, or use or direct students to extremist websites, or act in other ways that are counter to the professional standards expected of staff or potentially against the law. In such an event they should be subject to normal professional disciplinary procedures and if necessary colleges should ensure that behaviours are taken up with the local authority and police. The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) from 2009 (currently the Vetting and Barring Scheme) may also need to be informed.

Colleges should review:

■ whether the college's recruitment and induction material (including for governors) makes explicit the role of all staff in keeping students safe from harm;

- how professional standards for teachers (set out by Lifelong Learning UK) are promoted and reinforced;

- whether personnel processes ensure fair treatment of all staff;

- whether the college's duty to report racial incidents is exercised systematically.

> **College action:** review relevant college personnel policies and processes.

Accessing inappropriate content through the use of ICT

Websites and social networking sites are important vehicles for violent extremists to promote their message and to encourage engagement.

Colleges should do all that they can to promote effective and responsible use of ICT and to prevent staff or students from accessing illegal or inappropriate material through college ICT systems, including having appropriate monitoring systems in place with recourse to police and other partners as necessary.

> **College action:** review the ICT policy and practice to:
>
> – ensure that hardware and software systems used in the college are accredited through **Becta's accreditation schemes:** http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=is&catcode=ss_to_es_pys_fc_03 These require providers to block illegal content and at least 90% of inappropriate content. The definition of illegal content that Becta uses includes racist and hate material, and material that promotes violence or attack on individuals or institutions on the basis of religious, racial or gender grounds;
>
> – review the **Acceptable Use Policy** of the college for students and staff to ensure that use of material related to violent extremism is prohibited; and ensure students, staff and governors are clear on the policy, monitoring practices and the sanctions;

– ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of the issues regarding risk and **responsible use** and are discerning and discriminating consumers of online information.

External groups using college premises or facilities

There have been examples of groups linked to violent extremism trying to use college premises for campaigning or other events. Colleges should be aware of this risk and ensure that the college or local authority lettings policy sets out the values of the college and makes clear that any group whose aims are counter to those values may not hire the facility.

It is recommended that colleges liaise early with the local authorities or police to check the bona fides of groups if they have any concerns. This will then allow time for sensitive handling of particular applications for use of college premises.

College action: review the college and local authority lettings policy and ensure that staff managing college lettings know where to seek advice.

Responding to events

Violent extremism is unlikely to affect most colleges directly. However some colleges and their communities have been affected by:

■ national incidents such as the 7/7 bombings (which had a particular impact on colleges in London and Leeds);

■ international politics linked to events such as the invasion of Iraq, the situation in Afghanistan, Somalia or other scenes of conflict;

■ domestic political events in other countries relevant to particular diaspora communities within the UK;

■ local counter–terrorism operations and related community tensions;

■ media reports on political or faith groups which are seen as biased;

■ high profile trials of those accused of terrorist related offences.

Colleges need to understand their communities to be aware of what may impact on students and be prepared to respond.

Events in the local, national or international news

In the aftermath of an event or an incident colleges may choose to undertake whole college, year group or class-based sessions to promote opportunities for informed discussion including:

■ getting the facts clear – evidence versus rumour;

■ understanding motivations;

■ promoting human rights and legal protection – freedom of speech and due process to raise grievances.

Colleges should also ensure personal support is in place for staff and students most affected by incidents.

Local authority and partner services may be drawn on for:

■ advice briefings or support from police or other agencies;

■ educational psychology service support for college leaders in responding to incidents;

■ individual student case work;

■ corporate services for media management;

■ human resources support for staff issues.

College action: review the college emergency plan including post-event actions to ensure appropriate processes for supporting students and staff are incorporated.

Luton Sixth Form College actively encourages debate amongst students, with a Debating Society that explores a very eclectic range of topics and not ducking difficult issues, such as the factors surrounding Barack Obama's election as the first black President, US influence around the world and whether hip hop is a positive aspect of youth culture. It is managed and supported by a member of staff and the college will often put teams forward in external debating competitions.

Students involved in these debates get briefed and supported in developing their arguments and presenting these effectively. Students benefit from having their eyes opened to different ways of thinking about issues as well as finding unexpected common ground. Recent controversial events, such as the situation in Gaza and the right for clergy to membership of the BNP, will be on the agenda after half–term when the Society restarts after its mid–winter break for A and AS module exams.

Annex 1: Links between strategies impacting on Further Education and Sixth Form colleges

Key objectives DIUS/AoC guidance February 2008	Five strands of Preventing Violent Extremism Toolkit	Prevent strategy – Government action on Preventing Violent Extremism*
Shared values To promote and reinforce shared values; to create space for free and open debate; and to listen to and support mainstream voices	– staff and other students can model to students how diverse views can be heard, analysed and challenged in a way which values freedom of speech and freedom from harm – understand how an extremist narrative which can lead to harm can be challenged by staff in colleges – use teaching styles and curriculum which allow grievances to be aired, explored and demonstrate the role of conflict resolution and active citizenship	Challenging the violent extremist ideology and supporting mainstream voices

Key objectives DIUS/AoC guidance February 2008	Five strands of Preventing Violent Extremism Toolkit	Prevent strategy – Government action on Preventing Violent Extremism*
Break down community segregation To break down segregation amongst different student learner communities including by supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding and to engage all students/ learners in playing a full and active role in wider engagement in society	– increase the resilience of students and of college communities – through helping students acquire skills and knowledge to challenge extremist views, and promoting an ethos and values that promotes respect for others	Increasing the resilience of communities to violent extremism
Safety of learners To ensure student/learner safety and colleges that are free from bullying, harassment and intimidation	– understand how to support individuals who are vulnerable – strategies to support, challenge and protect	

Key objectives DIUS/AoC guidance February 2008	Five strands of Preventing Violent Extremism Toolkit	Prevent strategy – Government action on Preventing Violent Extremism*
Support for learners To provide support for students /learners who may be at risk and appropriate sources of advice and guidance	– understand how to support individuals who are vulnerable – strategies to support, challenge and protect	Supporting individuals who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism
Roles and responsibilities of staff and students To ensure that students/ learners and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing violent extremism	– understand how to support individuals who are vulnerable – strategies to support, challenge and protect	Addressing grievances, both genuine and perceived, that ideologues are exploiting. These can stem from national and international issues – for example relating to foreign policy, or perceptions of distorted media representation; or be based on local perceptions of inequality or experience of racism or community conflict

*The Prevent strategy also includes:
disrupting those who promote violent extremism and supporting institutions where they may be active which does directly impact on college-based activity.

Annex 2: Key objectives and best practice in colleges

1 To promote and reinforce shared values; to create space for free and open debate; and to listen to and support mainstream voices.

i) Promoting ECM outcomes, community cohesion, equalities and well-being

College policies are checked to ensure they emphasise the shared values of a pluralist society. Tutorial and induction activities encourage engagement and discussion of these values.

Activities are planned in the college year to promote community cohesion.

The outcomes for Every Child Matters are customised for relevance to the 14–19 age group and integrated into the tutorial programme. Curriculum is designed around opportunities to deliver ECM outcomes.

ii) Encouraging active citizenship and learner voice

Learner voice strategies are resourced to encourage involvement of students at all levels of college activity. Strategies model the democratic process and encourage learners to take responsibility for their actions. Best practice in learner involvement in course team planning meetings, the governing body, staff recruitment panels and lesson observation schemes are planned for.

iii) Using curriculum to challenge extremist narratives

Students are motivated to engage in the wider curriculum when it is delivered through naturally occurring opportunities. Managers ensure that courses are planned to integrate the Every Child Matters agenda. Students are encouraged to debate issues of community cohesion in relation to their main subject area. Course planning in areas without ethnic or religious diversity emphasise that future employment will be within an increasingly global economy

and society. Schemes of work demonstrate a wide range of teaching and learning activities including the use of debate and discussion to solve problems and air controversial issues.

2 To break down segregation amongst different student/learner communities including by supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding and to engage all students/learners in playing a full and active role in wider engagement in society.

i) Gain understanding of local issues through contacts with the local authority and police

The tutorial programme is planned to include involvement of inter-faith community leaders and access to a range of political views.

Tutorial planning allows time to discuss world events that impact on the college community.

ii) Developing a network of community contacts and links with mentors and role models including families

Student services in colleges maintain a network of contacts locally – religious and community leaders, local politicians, voluntary organisations and young people's advice and counselling services. This network is used to support course teams in curriculum delivery and tutorial co-ordinators in their annual planning cycle.

Police liaison officers are used to reinforce positively shared values and equality of treatment under the law. Key incident alerts are established with the police and a college contact so that the college can react quickly to local flashpoints and plan a strategy of intervention and diffusion. College risk strategy includes action in the event of a major incident either nationally or locally that could affect its student body.

Opportunities are used to place students in work placements in community organisations that help to foster a deeper understanding on inter-faith

and intercultural issues. Colleges model national and local democratic processes to gain representation on student union bodies and course committees. Consideration on reflecting the religious and ethnic diversity on student representative bodies should be given. This might include training for representation and mentoring courses for students.

Links with families need to be strong. Colleges need to develop strategies to communicate with parents and guardians and also recognise the importance of the extended family in some communities. Newsletters targeted at parents provide a good communication network and consideration needs to be given to translation into the parents' first language where there is a need. These newsletters can also be used to encourage parental participation in college events. Open evenings are advertised widely to encourage participation.

3 To ensure student/learner safety and colleges that are free from bullying, harassment and intimidation.

i) Implement effective anti–bullying policies

Induction of students makes clear reference to anti–bullying policies. Bullying is addressed swiftly and clear lines of responsibility are established to protect learners.

ii) Focus on narrowing the attainment gap for all groups

College improvement strategies make clear reference to the connection between attainment and fulfilling lives. Strategies are in place to support underperforming learners. Attendance policy ensures that poor attendees are targeted for support.

4 To provide support for students/ learners who may be at risk and appropriate sources of advice and guidance.

i) Provide effective student support processes

At risk procedures target learners who are vulnerable to pressures to be involved in criminal violence.

Mentoring schemes are established to provide support from student peers.

5 To ensure that students/learners and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing violent extremism.

i) Allow space for debate and increase staff confidence in discussing controversial issues

Staff are trained to understand and engage in issues where communities and individuals might have historical or cultural grievances. Local and national sources are used to develop resources to support staff to counter prejudice and biased information. Materials are developed to support tutorial staff.

The promotion of diversity is considered a priority and a high profile and is maintained throughout the year.

Annex 3: Further information about extremism issues: useful websites

Preventing violent extremism
This short booklet explains the Government's plans for countering violent extremism to protect the security of the UK in the long term: www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/violentextremism/

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the role of children's services or schools in this area, please contact: community.cohesion@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

Managing conflicting rights and issues of discrimination: promoting good relationships within the college community (AoC and QIA: January 2007) provides guidance on how to deal with situations where different groups have conflicting rights: http://excellence.qia.org.uk/page.aspx?o=equalityanddiversityresources

Educating against extremism – by Lynn Davies, Birmingham University. Looks at the processes that can lead individuals to extreme beliefs or the use of violence and suggests ways in which education can help.

The Security Service website provides information on the radicalisation process and on extremist groups including Al-Qaida: www.mi5.gov.uk/output/al-qaidas-ideology.html

The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) which supports local authorities has a web resource available on the Knowledge section of its website dedicated to preventing violent extremism which provides updates on policy, useful links and information: www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=7890410

The US-based Anti-Defamation League provides information on graphic and numerical symbols used by far right groups: www.adl.org/hate_symbols/Unsere.asp

Teaching, learning and curriculum resources

DEA – *Global dimension*
A guide to resources which support global and intercultural understanding: www.globaldimension.org.uk/

1001 Inventions
A resource that looks at the heritage that the Muslim community shares with other communities in the UK, Europe and across the World: www.1001inventions.com

Oxfam – *Global citizenship guides: teaching controversial issues*
Strategies and activities to help teachers address controversial issues: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/teachersupport/cpd/controversial/

Teachernet – *Teaching about controversial issues*
Guidelines for handling controversial issues, both in the classroom and in informal conversations with students, drawing on recent publications in this area: www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/racistbullying/preventing/controversialissues/

Commission for Racial Equality – *Defeating organised racial hatred*
Information to challenge common myths about people from minority groups: www.equalityhumanrights.com/Documents/Race/Employment/Defeating_organised_racial_hatred.pdf

The Holocaust Centre and Holocaust Educational Trust
Outreach programmes and teaching materials to educate young people about the Holocaust and lessons to be learned on combating prejudice and racism: www.holocaustcentre.net and www.het.org.uk/content.php

QCA – *Respect for all*

A range of whole college and subject-related guidance and resources on valuing diversity and challenging racism through the curriculum:
www.qca.org.uk/qca_6753.aspx

Teachernet – *Racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia*
Links to a variety of resources to support the college workforce in tackling issues of racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia:
www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/racistbullying/developing/racismantisemitism/

Muslim Youth Helpline
Faith and culturally sensitive counselling service to Muslim youth aged 16-25:
www.myh.org.uk

Radical Middle Way
Information, resources and events aimed at articulating a relevant mainstream understanding of Islam that is proactive and relevant to young British Muslims:
www.radicalmiddleway.co.uk

Diversity and Dialogue
An online directory of projects and resources aimed at bringing young people from different faiths and backgrounds together:
www.diversityanddialogue.org.uk

All Faiths and None (AFAN)
The AFAN website provides resources to enable learners and staff to develop an understanding of other worldviews. AFAN contributors have been working with **fbfe** Regional Development Officers to run staff development days in colleges around the country:
www.afan.uk.net/

Annex 4: Legal and contractual powers

Issue	Legal and contractual powers
Institute for Learning Code of Professional Practice	The Code of Professional Practice defines the professional behaviour which, in the public interest, the Institute expects of its members throughout their membership and professional career. In publishing the Code, the Institute is able to maintain and promote its standards of professional conduct, ensuring continued public confidence. In retaining membership, members recognise their ongoing obligations under the Code and agree to abide by and be bound by it, and any other rules of membership.

Members alleged to be in breach of the Code will be subject to disciplinary investigation. In applying for and retaining membership, members of the Institute agree to be bound by the Disciplinary Procedures.

The Institute can only investigate concerns relating to misconduct by its members (or that they have been cautioned or convicted for a relevant offence) and any such concerns must relate to the professional behaviour of the member.

Any alleged breach of the standards may trigger an investigation and other action under the college's own disciplinary procedures:

www.ifl.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/4903/IfLCodeofProfessionalPractice.pdf |

Issue	Legal and contractual powers
College behaviour policy	In setting a college behaviour policy, governors working with Principal, staff and students can set a framework which supports the values it wishes to promote.
Searching for and confiscation of inappropriate items	Under section 85B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (inserted by the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006), the Principal of an FE institution or an authorised member of the college staff has a statutory power to search a student or his/her possessions without consent if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting the student is in possession of a weapon. Specific guidance on searching students for weapons is available: www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=11454
Use of force	Section 85C of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 enables a member of staff to use reasonable force in certain defined circumstances to prevent an offence or the continuation of one; to prevent personal injury or damage to the property of any person (including the student); and to prevent anything which prejudices the maintenance of good order and discipline at the institution.

Issue	Legal and contractual powers
Nuisance or disturbance on educational premises	Section 85A of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 provides that any person who without lawful authority is present on premises to which this section applies (including premises of an FE institution) and causes or permits nuisance or disturbance to the annoyance of persons who lawfully use those premises (whether or not any such persons are present at the time) is guilty of an offence. The section empowers a police constable or a person authorised by the "appropriate authority" to exercise this power, to remove from the premises in question any person whom he has reasonable cause to suspect of committing, or having committed, an offence under this section.
Freedom of speech	Section 43 of the Education (No 2) Act 1986 provides that all those concerned in the government of Further Education institutions are to take reasonably practicable steps to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students, employees and visiting speakers. The duty includes ensuring, so far as reasonably practicable, that use of premises, including those occupied by the students' union, is not denied on account of beliefs or policies. Governing bodies are to issue and keep up to date codes of practice on conduct and procedures to be

Issue	Legal and contractual powers
	followed by members, students and employees in connection with the organisation of meetings and other activities; and compliance with the codes (together, if need be, with disciplinary measures) is the responsibility of those concerned in the government of the establishment.
Preventing use of violent extremist websites	The college can require students and staff to abide by Acceptable User Policies which make clear that accessing such sites is unacceptable. Using college computers to email terrorist publications to others might constitute a criminal offence.

Annex 5: The Al-Qaida 'single narrative'

Al-Qaida's ideology claims that the (alleged) impoverished state of the Muslim world today is the result of a Zionist–Christian alliance against Islam dating back to the crusades. They use a 'single narrative' linking a particular interpretation of history with a number of current grievances – some of which may be quite widely shared by Muslims and non–Muslims alike – to build up a picture of a global conspiracy against Muslims. These include perceived injustices (e.g. Palestine); opposition to military intervention (e.g. in Iraq or Afghanistan); the treatment of Muslim prisoners at Guantanamo; local perceptions of discrimination (e.g. a view that stop and search rules are not operated fairly).

They assert that the solution is to eradicate Western influences from the Muslim world and replace existing governments with a single political entity ruling over all Muslims and adopting Islamic law – a return to the historical 'Caliphate'.

Al-Qaida's members adopt an extreme interpretation of Islamic teaching which they believe places an obligation on believers to fight and kill to achieve their aims. Most Muslims and the world's leading Islamic scholars reject this position. Europe's leading Islamic scholars have declared that "under no circumstances does Islam permit terrorism and the killing of civilians. Terrorism is in direct contravention to the principles of Islam and the vast majority of Muslims remain faithful to these teachings".

Al-Qaida strongly opposes Western influences and ideas that it regards as 'un-Islamic'. Notably, it is explicitly opposed to democratic principles. It claims that democracy is a rival 'religion' and that principles such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion are equivalent to apostasy, punishable by death. Al-Qaida's opposition to 'un-Islamic' ideas extends to condemnation of Muslim religious practices of which they disapprove. In particular, Al-Qaida supports a narrow interpretation of Sunnism, the largest denomination of Islam, and is violently opposed to other Islamic denominations which it regards as 'infidel', as well as to Sunni Muslims whom it regards as insufficiently pious.

Some other fundamentalist groups, sometimes referred to as 'Islamist', also oppose 'Western' values, seek strict adherence to Islamic law, and share the political aim of the restoration of the Caliphate. However, they do not agree that there is religious justification for the use of violence to achieve these aims.

Al-Qaida relies on audiences lacking an in-depth knowledge of the issues and on the spread of misinformation. It ignores factual evidence contrary to its claims about the role of Western powers (e.g. military intervention to protect Kosovan Albanian Muslims or aid to Palestinian peoples) and glosses over the fact that the majority of the victims of extremist violence are fellow Muslims.

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