

QAP	3.11
ISSUE DATE	Jul 2005
AUTHOR	D Hankey
SHEET	1 of 5
FORMS	0
REVIEWED	Sep 2026
REVIEWED BY	H Young
CHECK BY	Sep 2027

Quality Assurance Policies & Procedures

SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT POLICY

CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION

Appendix C – Prevent

Statutory context: Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015; Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales (2023, updated 6 March 2024); Channel duty guidance; and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales-accessible>

Introduction

Hartlepool College of Further Education has a statutory duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 applies to every learner under 18; adult learners who may be at risk are supported through the College's adult safeguarding arrangements. Prevent forms part of the College's wider safeguarding responsibilities and applies across learning, apprenticeships, work placements, online activity, events, partnerships and use of College premises. This appendix must be read alongside the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy, local referral procedures and the College's online safety arrangements.

Purpose and principles

Prevent is one of the four strands of the UK counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. Its purpose is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The College's approach is safeguarding-led, proportionate, risk-based and compatible with equality, freedom of speech and academic freedom. Lawful debate, political activity, religious belief, identity or protected characteristics must never be treated as evidence of radicalisation.

Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism

- Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks
- Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

In accordance with the Prevent duty guidance, the College will:

understand and respond to the terrorist threat relevant to the College and its local context;

- identify and support people who may be susceptible to radicalisation at the earliest opportunity;
- build staff capability through training, clear procedures and effective partnership working;
- reduce permissive environments in which terrorist ideology, activity or support could operate; and
- monitor impact and improve arrangements through governance, audit and lessons learned.

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Leadership, governance and accountability

The governing body and senior leaders retain strategic oversight of the Prevent duty. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), supported by deputy DSLs, coordinates the operational response to Prevent concerns and referrals. Leaders will ensure that:

- a named senior leader and the DSL lead Prevent activity, with clear cover and escalation arrangements;
- governors receive proportionate safeguarding and Prevent training and scrutinise risk, referrals, training, filtering and monitoring, and improvement actions;
- the Prevent risk assessment and action plan are current, owned, reviewed and informed by local, regional and national intelligence;
- staff, volunteers, contractors, employers and partners understand the expectations relevant to their role; and
- evidence from incidents, referrals, learner voice, audits and quality assurance is used to evaluate impact and improve practice.

Scope:

This appendix applies to governors, employees, agency staff, volunteers, contractors, learners, apprentices, employers, placement providers, subcontractors, visitors, speakers, partners and all other users of College premises or systems. It applies to College-led activity on site, off site and online, including remote learning, work placements, apprenticeships, trips, events, venue hire and partnership provision.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff must read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Part One in full, understand the College's systems, know the DSL and deputies, complete required training and act immediately on concerns. Practice must be child-centred for under-18s and person-centred for adults at risk.

Prevent risk assessment and action plan

The College will maintain a documented Prevent risk assessment and action plan covering, as appropriate: curriculum areas; apprenticeships and placements; online and remote learning; filtering and monitoring; external speakers and events; prayer and reflection spaces; displays, literature and fundraising; venue hire; visitors; partnerships and subcontracted provision. Actions will identify an owner, timescale and review arrangements.

Channel is a voluntary, multi-agency programme that provides tailored support to people assessed as susceptible to radicalisation. Information may be lawfully shared and assessed before consent to support is obtained. Consent, capacity and parental responsibility will be considered in accordance with the Channel duty guidance. If Channel is not appropriate, declined, or unable to manage the risk, the College and partner agencies will consider other safeguarding, support or police action.

What is Extremism?

For the purposes of this appendix, extremism is understood in accordance with the current government definition and Prevent duty guidance. Staff must focus on conduct, context and risk. Lawful belief, debate, protest, faith or political opinion is not, by itself, a Prevent concern.

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What is Radicalisation?

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to legitimise support for, or the use of, terrorist violence. A person may be susceptible to radicalisation because of a combination of influences and circumstances; there is no single profile, pathway or checklist.

What is Terrorism?

Terrorism has the meaning given in the Terrorism Act 2000. It includes the use or threat of specified serious action designed to influence government or an international governmental organisation, or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause. Staff should not attempt to determine whether a criminal threshold is met; concerns must be referred promptly through safeguarding procedures.

Identifying Factors

There is no single indicator of radicalisation. Staff must consider behaviour, words, online activity, relationships, context, protective factors and change over time. Identity, faith, migration, disability, SEND, mental ill health, trauma, appearance, friendship changes or experiences of discrimination do not by themselves indicate radicalisation.

- expressed support for terrorism, terrorist organisations or the use of violence to advance an ideological cause;
- accessing, sharing, creating or seeking terrorist propaganda or instructional material;
- attempts to recruit, influence or pressure others towards terrorist ideology or activity;
- contact with recruiters or networks linked to terrorism, including through online platforms, gaming, messaging or encrypted services;
- fixation on terrorist violence, targets, weapons or attack planning; or
- a combination of concerning changes, grievances, coercion, exploitation or isolation that may increase susceptibility when considered with other evidence.

Staff must remain professionally curious, avoid assumptions and record observable facts: what was seen or heard, the learner's own words where possible, relevant context, immediate action, information shared, decisions, rationale and outcomes.

Action on a concern: staff must act without delay, record the concern promptly on CPOMS and notify the DSL or a deputy DSL. Staff must not investigate, confront the learner, promise confidentiality or make an external Prevent referral independently. If anyone is in immediate danger, call 999 and then inform the DSL. The DSL will assess the concern alongside other safeguarding information, seek advice from the local authority or police Prevent team where appropriate, decide whether a Prevent referral or another safeguarding pathway is required, and record the decision, rationale, information shared and outcome.

Challenging Ideologies

The College supports lawful freedom of speech and respectful discussion. Through curriculum, tutorial and enrichment activity, learners and apprentices will develop critical thinking, media and digital literacy, understanding of misinformation and manipulation, and knowledge of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual

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respect and tolerance. Staff will challenge prejudice, hatred and terrorist narratives without closing down legitimate debate or stigmatising individuals or communities.

Online safety is integral to Prevent. The College will use appropriate filtering and monitoring, staff supervision, education and reporting arrangements to address risks arising from websites, social media, messaging, gaming, livestreaming, encrypted services, algorithms, generative AI, manipulated media and deepfakes. Controls will cover College-owned and personally owned devices used for College activity and will be reviewed against the Prevent risk assessment.

Mental ill health is not evidence of radicalisation. Staff should consider whether mental health needs, trauma, exploitation, bullying, discrimination, SEND or other circumstances are contributing to risk and ensure that safeguarding, wellbeing and Prevent responses are coordinated. Any immediate risk of harm or mental health crisis must be escalated through the appropriate safeguarding and emergency pathway.

The College will apply proportionate due diligence and approval arrangements to external speakers, events, visitors, literature, fundraising, prayer or reflection spaces and venue hire. Where risks cannot be mitigated, activity will not proceed. Employers, placement providers and subcontractors must have clear safeguarding and Prevent expectations, reporting routes and information-sharing arrangements, with risk-based assurance by the College.

Raising Concerns

All staff, partners and stakeholders must report Prevent concerns through the College safeguarding procedure. Concerns about safeguarding practice, failures to act or conduct by an adult working with learners must be raised through the appropriate safeguarding, low-level concerns, allegations or whistleblowing procedure. A person who feels unable to raise a child safeguarding concern internally may use the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

Training, Assurance and Inspection Readiness

All staff will receive safeguarding and Prevent training at induction, regular updates and refresher training proportionate to their role. DSLs, senior leaders and relevant governors will maintain role-specific knowledge. Understanding will be checked through supervision, scenarios, audits, learner voice and review of practice, rather than relying solely on attendance records.

Leaders will be able to demonstrate the impact of the College's arrangements through evidence generated in normal business, including:

- a current Prevent risk assessment and action plan;
- governor and senior leader scrutiny, challenge and follow-up;
- staff training, checks of understanding and confidence in reporting;
- timely, factual CPOMS records showing action, decisions, rationale and outcomes;
- effective filtering and monitoring reviews and online safety education;
- external speaker, event, placement, apprenticeship and subcontractor assurance;
- learner and apprentice understanding of risk and how to seek help; and
- analysis of themes, referrals, disproportionality, lessons learned and resulting improvements.

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Related policies and procedures

- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy and local referral procedures
- Code of Conduct and whistleblowing procedures
- Online Safety and staff/learner acceptable use policies
- External Speakers and Events Policy
- Distribution of Literature, Posters and Publicity procedure
- Venue Hire, Visitors and Contractors procedures
- Apprenticeship, Work Placement and Subcontractor safeguarding arrangements
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Learner Behaviour, Bullying and Harassment policies
- Multi-Faith Prayer Room Policy

Monitoring and review

This appendix will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following statutory change, significant incidents, local threat information, safeguarding learning or identified weaknesses. The policy owner will report material findings and improvement actions through the College's safeguarding governance arrangements. The College will maintain accessible evidence from its normal business processes and will not create unnecessary documentation solely for inspection.

Key statutory guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales-accessible>