

Services For Education

DSL DISCUSSIONS - PREVENTING RADICALISATION

Raising the topic...

Radicalisation as a term is often thought of in relation to extremist religious groups, but there are many ways in which students in our settings can become radicalised therefore, it is essential that all staff understand the risks and the signs to be aware of.

As concerns regarding the radicalisation of children and young people increase, schools have a duty to actively challenge extremist views and prevent young people being drawn into terrorism. Keeping children safe from harm includes keeping them safe from extreme ideologies and behaviours. Being drawn into terrorism includes both violent extremism and non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can promote views which terrorists exploit.

In all education settings, staff must be aware of the potential influences of extremist ideology and the risks of radicalisation. To do this, settings must build relationships with their students, their families and have a strong understanding of the both the lived experiences of the children they teach and the contextual safeguarding risks they face.

Questions to discuss...

- Do all staff have a good understanding of the definitions of extremism, terrorism and radicalisation?
- What is Channel and what does this process look like?
- What are the signs and symptoms of radicalisation? Could these be confused with other situations?
- What would make a child more vulnerable to radicalisation? How are children who fit these categories supported or monitored?
- What are the procedures in school if you suspected a child was at risk of radicalisation or was sharing extremist or terrorist views with their peers?
- How can we talk about the themes of terrorism, radicalisation and extremism in a way that informs and supports children, without reinforced stereotypes?

What can you do?

Assess the risk: Staff need to assess the risk to specific vulnerable children as well as whole cohorts.

Check unconscious bias: Ensure staff don't see radicalisation and extremism as only impacting particular children or communities- challenge stereotypes and bias.

Build resilience and tolerance: Through effective and impactful teaching of British Values and throughout the curriculum, children should be taught about respect, tolerance and resilience as well as about cultures outside their own.

Zero Tolerance Approach: All stereotypical, racist and extremist behaviour needs to be immediately challenged and your setting's protocols should be followed.

Staff training: The government have provided free PREVENT training for staff in schools, which is beneficial for all staff to do.

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