

**REPORT TO:** Children, Young People & Families Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 22 February 2016

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, People and Economy

**PORTFOLIO:** Children, Young People and Families

**SUBJECT:** Prevent duty and support to schools by the Local Authority Halton Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

**WARDS:** Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

**1.1** In response to the Prevent duty provision placed on schools and in support of guidance published in June 2015, the report informs members of the ways in which the Local Authority is currently supporting schools in embedding that duty and protecting young people from extremism and the risk of radicalisation.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) Note the contents of the report;
- 2) Note the resource implications potentially needed to discharge this duty and the need to prepare accordingly;
- 3) Consider any further partnership approach required underneath this duty

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**3.1** All schools have received a briefing paper explaining the Prevent agenda as one element the Governments Counter Terrorism Strategy, known as CONTEST. The paper informs schools of the contact details for the local Prevent Officer within Cheshire Police and Community Safety Team. The paper also outlines the fundamental British values and the need to promote those values as a part of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupils and ensure the school website demonstrates this. Additional support to schools has been through presentations by the local Prevent Officer at headteachers meetings and an update to Secondary and College headteachers and principals by HBC Chief Executive and the LA Officer to Halton Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) regarding the support and guidance available to them.

- 3.2** All schools have been provided with materials to support The Prevent duty departmental advice circulated in June 2015, the departmental advice on SMSC in November 2014 and promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools departmental advice for maintained schools in November 2014. The guidance and supporting materials have also been shared with Chairs of Governing Bodies via the Director's briefings to support schools in being able to assess the risks affecting children and young people in the area and the extent to which they are at risk.
- 3.3** Halton SACRE has a dedicated section on HBC website. All the materials to support the Prevent agenda sit in that area. They are also uploaded onto the secure website provided by Halton to all schools called perspectivelite which all schools have direct access to and have been notified of them being uploaded. Halton SACRE has adopted a new Locally Agreed Syllabus which will support schools in further strengthening their curriculum with reference to British values and the Prevent duty, supporting children in building resilience to radicalisation.
- 3.4** The Local Authority Officer to SACRE has established strong links with a colleague in Warrington. This has enabled both SACRE to meet together to share ways to support schools in the future. This has led to a joint Halton/Warrington SACRE conference for teachers of RE which engaged colleagues in teaching British values as part of SMSC.
- 3.5** The Halton and Warrington NQT conference in October 2015 had a session delivered by The Peace Centre, Warrington. Delegates directly engaged with the Prevent agenda, identifying risk and steps to take to support any identified children at risk of being drawn into terrorism or extremism.
- 3.6** Halton Safeguarding Children Board is responsible for co-ordinating what is done by local agencies for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Halton and implementing policies and procedures where children are deemed at risk of being drawn into terrorism or extremism.
- 3.7** Halton schools and settings are best placed to assess their training needs in light of their assessment of risk. The Local Authority advises that the Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes Prevent awareness training that can be fed back to staff. This is being asked of all schools as part of the 2015 Annual return by schools to SACRE.
- 3.8** Channel is a police-coordinated, multi-agency partnership that evaluates referrals of individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, working alongside safeguarding partnerships and crime reduction panels. Channel is a key element of the Prevent strategy. It is a process for safeguarding individuals by assessing their vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism. Channel is about early intervention to

protect and divert people away from the risk they may face of being drawn into any terrorist – related activity.

- 3.9** If a person is identified as being at risk, a referral is made to a Channel Police Practitioner who will complete a preliminary assessment. This assessment looks at how engaged the person is in potential terrorist activity, what their intentions are and how capable they are of carrying out acts of terrorism. The Channel multi – agency panel uses the existing collaborations between the LA, the police, voluntary sector and the local community to assess the referral. If the person is suitable for help through the Channel process, support packages and interventions will be put in place.
- 3.10** There is a HBC online Channel awareness training module for school staff to complete. In the recent Halton SACRE annual return, 72% of responding schools had completed the online module as a whole staff. All schools work closely with Halton Safeguarding Children Board to support their practice allied to the Prevent duty (risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, IT policies and building children’s resilience to radicalisation).
- 3.11** All schools are familiar with contact for a referral, the Channel Police Practitioner and single point of contact. In Halton this is Mike Andrews, the community safety manager. Mike Andrews sits on the Pan Cheshire Channel Panel. The Halton Channel Panel has been established and has already met once.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1** In complying with the duty the guidance states that all specified authorities as a first step, should demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the risk of radicalisation in their area, institution or body.
- 4.2** For schools and registered childcare providers there are four themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies
- 4.3** Under the theme of **risk assessment** specified authorities are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn in to terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This should be based on an understanding, shared with partners, of the potential risk in the local area.
- 4.4** Specified authorities need to demonstrate they are protecting children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies in place to identify children at risk, and intervening as appropriate.
- 4.5** Under the theme **working in partnership** governing bodies and proprietors of all schools and registered childcare providers should

ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

- 4.6** Under the theme **staff training** specified authorities should make sure staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. They should know where and how to refer children and young people for further help. Prevent awareness training is a key part of this.

The place to make the referral is to the Police's Channel Co-ordinator. Each local authority area is required to establish a Channel Panel. One has been established in Halton. Each Channel Panel is chaired by the local authority and brings together a range of multi-agency partners to collect and assess the risk surrounding any of the individuals referred to the Panel and can then decide a package of support to help that individual. Anyone can make a referral to the Panel and the individual referred can choose whether or not to participate in the programme.

- 4.7** Under the theme **IT policies** specified authorities will be expected to ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school, including by establishing appropriate levels of filtering.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** Although continued work with schools and settings builds on current work being undertaken as part of the existing Prevent activity there are likely to be resource implications arising from additional support and guidance in the future through SACRE and its responsibility to support schools.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 Children and Young People in Halton** – ensure schools and settings are meeting their statutory duty to ensure that in Halton children and young people are safeguarded, healthy and happy, and receive their entitlement of high quality services that are sensitive to need, inclusive and accessible to all.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1** The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects the specified authorities in England. When assessing the effectiveness of schools, Ofsted inspectors already have regard to the school's approach to keeping pupils safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, and what is done when it is suspected that pupils are vulnerable to these. Maintained schools are subject to intervention, and academies and free schools may be subject to

termination of their funding agreement, if they are judged by Ofsted to require significant improvement or special measures, or if they fail to take the steps required by their local authority, or for academies or free schools by the Secretary of State pursuant to their funding agreement, as applicable, to address unacceptably low standards, serious breakdowns of management or governance or if the safety of pupils or staff is threatened. Early education funding regulations in England have been amended to ensure that providers who fail to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs do not receive funding from local authorities for the free early years entitlement. Ofsted's current inspection framework for early year's provision reflects the requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

The Equality Act 2010 brings together into one Act all previous legislation around Equality and Diversity. Under the Duty a public authority must, in carrying out its functions, take into account the need to: -

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Act defines a number of characteristics which are protected: -

- (a) Age
- (b) Disability
- (c) Gender reassignment
- (d) Marriage and civil partnership
- (e) Pregnancy and maternity
- (f) Race
- (g) Religion or belief
- (h) Sex
- (i) Sexual orientation

## **9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**Document****Place of Inspection****Contact Officer**

Prevent duty: Guidance  
for England and Wales.  
2015

Counter terrorism  
strategy. HM  
Government. 2015

Improving SMSC  
development of pupils,  
Departmental advice  
Nov 2013

Mark Higginbottom