



St. Thomas More
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

Prevent Policy

Approved by	
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Date:	September 2026
Review date:	September 2027

The St Thomas More Mission:

We the St Thomas More family, 'aspire not to have more but be more'.

We aspire not to have the world but be more for the world.

#BeMore

We are **A**uthentic we seek to find our true vocation and who we really are

We are **S**acred we are loved and made in the image of God

We are **P**assionate we strive to grow and be our best selves

We are **I**nspirational what we do here can help us change the world

We are **R**esilient for our greatest learning comes when we make mistakes

We are **E**mpathetic we are called to care for all in our community and the world

We the St Thomas More family "Aspire not to have more but be more."

As a Catholic school, we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where every child is valued and protected. Our Catholic ethos, together with our values of being Authentic, Sacred, Passionate, Inspirational, Resilient and Empathetic, promotes respect, dignity, tolerance and social responsibility.

We recognise that safeguarding children from radicalisation and extremism is part of our wider responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

Policy Statement

St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy is fully committed to its duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and recognises the Prevent Duty as an integral part of safeguarding. The school aims to:

- Safeguard pupils from radicalisation and extremism.
- Identify children who may be vulnerable to extremist influences.
- Promote resilience through education and positive relationships.
- Provide a safe environment where controversial issues can be discussed appropriately.
- Work effectively with parents, carers, partner agencies and safeguarding services.
- Ensure staff understand their Prevent responsibilities.
- Promote British Values alongside Catholic Social Teaching.

Prevent concerns will be treated in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

Legal framework and related documents

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (in force until 31 August 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (from 1 September 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards
- DfE Guidance on Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education

Current KCSIE guidance highlights radicalisation as a safeguarding issue and specifically identifies online harms including misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories and risks arising from digital technologies and AI-generated content.

This policy also operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Online safety

Definitions

Radicalisation: refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Extremism: The promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to:

- Negate or destroy the rights and freedoms of others;
- Undermine democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty;
- Create an environment that permits violence against others.

British Values: include democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Terrorism: the use or threat of serious violence designed to influence government or intimidate the public in pursuit of a political, religious, racial or ideological cause.

Prevent: Part of the Government's CONTEST Strategy, which aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Channel: A multi-agency programme that provides early intervention and support to individuals identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Introduction

This policy forms part of St. Thomas More's commitment to keeping children safe. Since the 'Education and Inspections Act 2006', schools have a duty to promote community cohesion. Over the last few years, global events have led to a growth in extremist viewpoints, including advocacy of violent extremism. In March 2015, new statutory duties were placed on schools by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) which says All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Act to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The school recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent

those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, our staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

We have a duty to prepare our children for life in modern Britain and to keep them safe. All staff are expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Evidence shows that children with low aspirations are more vulnerable to radicalisation. Therefore, the school's ethos and the work it carries out to ensure students have confidence and self-belief and are tolerant and respectful whilst having high expectations of themselves, are crucial in combating radicalisation.

Aims:

The main aims of this policy statement are to ensure that all staff and governors are vigilant for the signs of radicalisation; that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues 'will not happen here' and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our children are safe from harm.

Objectives:

- All governors, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism are and why we need to be vigilant in school.
- All governors, teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on anti-radicalisation and extremism and will follow the policy when issues arise.
- The school will ensure this policy is available to the wider community through its website and in hard copy from the school reception on request.

Indicators of Vulnerability:

There are no known definitive indicators that a young person is vulnerable to radicalisation, but there are a number of signs that together increase the risk. These include:

- Identity Crisis – the student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- Personal Crisis – the student may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal Circumstances – migration, local community tensions and events affecting the student's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy

- Unmet Aspirations – the student may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment and poor resettlement/reintegration
- Special Educational Need –students may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

Recognising extremism:

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- Making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes, and networks that young people can come across online so particular individuals / groups may not become apparent)
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour, and peer relationships
- Secretive behaviour
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race, or sexuality
- Graffiti artwork or writing that displays extremist themes
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- Advocating violence towards others

Procedure for referrals:

The named member of staff for Prevent is: **Alison Pimblett, Assistant Headteacher and DSL**

The Point of Contact for the school is The Headteacher or the DSL, who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the school are aware and work together to protect students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism, or forms of extremism, which lead to terrorism
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the school's RHSE and Personal Development curriculum and assembly policy to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism
- Attending Channel meetings as necessary, or ensuring that the school is represented, and carrying out any actions as agreed
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner with appropriate personnel and/or local agencies.

Although serious incidents involving radicalisation have not occurred at our school to date, it is important for us to be vigilant and fully informed about issues that affect the local and wider area. Staff are reminded to suspend any professional disbelief that incidents of radicalisation 'could not happen here' and to refer any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead's (DDSL's) in school.

Staff can also contact the local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number). Where they can talk in confidence about their concerns and access support and advice.

Role of the Curriculum:

The curriculum at St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy plays a fundamental role in fulfilling the school's Prevent Duty by equipping pupils with the knowledge, skills and resilience needed to recognise and challenge extremist ideologies and other forms of harmful influence. Through a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum, pupils develop an understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, in line with the fundamental British Values and the school's Catholic ethos. Prevent-related education is embedded across a range of curriculum areas, including Religious Education, Personal Development, Relationships Education and Computing, where pupils are encouraged to think critically, evaluate the reliability of

information, recognise misinformation and disinformation, develop resilience to online manipulation and know how and where to seek help if they have concerns.

At Key Stage 3, pupils study a range of world religions and beliefs, fostering understanding and respect for diversity, while at Key Stage 4 all pupils undertake GCSE Religious Studies, enabling them to explore ethical, moral and contemporary issues in greater depth.

The school's assemblies, known as *Celebration of the Word*, reinforce Catholic Social Teaching, British Values and the importance of dignity, respect and inclusion within society. Pupils are also encouraged to develop leadership, responsibility and active citizenship through opportunities such as the School Council, Pupil Parliament, prefect programme, student mentoring and a wide range of enrichment activities.

In addition, the school maintains established links with the Armed Forces and military organisations, providing pupils with valuable learning opportunities that promote service, leadership, resilience, democracy and the rule of law, while reinforcing equality, inclusivity and respect for all members of society. Through these experiences, the curriculum supports pupils in becoming informed, resilient and responsible citizens who are well prepared to participate positively in modern Britain and are less vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist influence.

Online Safety

St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy recognises that radicalisation and exposure to extremist ideologies increasingly occur online through social media platforms, gaming communities, livestreaming services, encrypted messaging applications, recommendation algorithms and AI-generated content.

As part of its wider safeguarding responsibilities, the school has robust filtering and monitoring systems in place that comply with current Department for Education guidance and are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective in protecting pupils from accessing illegal, harmful or inappropriate material. The school is committed to providing a safe online environment by maintaining effective filtering and monitoring arrangements, educating pupils about safe and responsible online behaviour, developing their digital resilience and critical thinking skills, and responding promptly to any online safety concerns or incidents.

Staff receive regular training to enable them to recognise emerging online risks, including extremist content, misinformation and harmful online influences, and to respond appropriately in line with safeguarding procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), safeguarding team, senior leadership team and governing body maintain strategic oversight of the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements, ensuring they are effective, proportionate and compliant with statutory guidance, including the requirements of

Keeping Children Safe in Education. The school also keeps emerging online trends under regular review to ensure that safeguarding practices continue to reflect the evolving digital landscape.

Staff training:

Training opportunities include online access to the TheKey Training, as well as staff meetings and INSET training. St Thomas More will ensure our staff are fully aware of the threats, risks and vulnerabilities that are linked to radicalisation and are aware of the process of radicalisation and how this might be identified early on. This information will form part of our annual safeguarding training. A quick guide is also available to staff (Appendix A).

Safer recruitment:

We ensure our recruitment processes are rigorous, in line with statutory requirements, best practice guidance and the Trust's safer recruitment policy. These processes include the use of the DBS checks and online searches for all employees, governors, and regular volunteers.

DfE Risk Assessment:

The school had completed the DfE Risk Assessment for Prevent. This risk assessment is reviewed annually along with this policy.

APPENDIX A



Quick Read: the Prevent duty

What is the Prevent duty

The Prevent duty requires **all** schools to "have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism", under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The duty covers all types of extremism, whether political, religious or ideological.

What does it mean for our school?

You need to protect pupils from the risk of radicalisation, as part of your wider safeguarding duties and duty to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

To do this, you should:

- Promote the fundamental British values in your curriculum
- Make sure your school is a safe space for pupils to discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and extremism
- Ensure you have robust safeguarding procedures to identify children at risk
- Engage with your LA's risk assessment to determine the potential risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism in your local area
- Make sure you have measures in place to protect pupils from harmful online content, including setting up appropriate filtering and monitoring systems
- Make sure staff receive training to help them identify pupils at risk, challenge extremist ideas, and know how to act if they have a concern

St Thomas More fulfils the requirements above and all staff at the school have Prevent training as standard. Our Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has completed additional Prevent awareness training.

What should I do if I have a concern?

Follow the school's usual safeguarding procedures. Concerns can be reported on MyConcern, or you may wish to discuss your concerns with the DSL or a member of Child Protection and Safeguarding Team. From here, they will decide whether to involve other agencies such as the LA, police, social services, or Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting those at risk of being drawn into terrorism.