



## **Maendy Primary School**

# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Chair of Governors: Mrs R Elston**

**Date: 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**Revised: Autumn Term 2017**

This policy is inline with the procedures set out in the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. Torfaen's Safeguarding Children and Young People in Educational Settings Policy and Procedures (Sept 2015) inform the school's own policy and procedures.

At Maendy Primary School we agree that the safety and protection of all pupils is of paramount importance and that all staff will adhere to this policy.

- Adults in school are well placed to detect signs of ill treatment or abuse of children in their care. Designated Child Protection Officers will undertake full training every 2 years, staff and Governors will be trained annually by the school's designated officers; trainees will be trained through the school's Induction Process.
- Teachers see children every day and are aware of their normal patterns of behaviour. They are therefore in a good position to notice subtle changes in behaviour, which may indicate that something is wrong. There could be a reasonable explanation for the child's behaviour but teachers should always be alert to any signs of unhappiness or distress, neglect or maltreatment.
- The abuse of children knows no boundaries; it can take place right across the social spectrum.
- Children have rights - and they have the right to be protected from abuse.

All adults in school have a vital role to play in ensuring that children are protected from abuse.

Legislation regarding the identification of convicted 'child sex offenders' states that their residence address and identity will be released to Headteachers on a 'need to know' basis. If a Headteacher is informed that a 'child sex offender' is in the locality of the School, it is not for the Headteacher to decide upon whether or not parents can be informed - this is the decision of the police. In the situation where a Headteacher is aware that a 'child sex offender' is in the vicinity of the School, but no authorisation has been given to inform parents, then that Headteacher may be well advised to make 'awareness of strangers' and 'personal safety' a high profile topic in the current assembly programme or the current Personal & Social Education (PSE) scheme of work.

At Maendy Primary School there are 3 Designated Child Protection Officers:

1. Mrs J Cresswell (Headteacher)
2. Mrs S Thomas (Deputy Headteacher)
3. Mrs D Baker (HLTA, SENCO & LAC Officer)

All staff have total commitment to child protection. They raise children's awareness about themselves through PSE and develop a trusting climate so that children feel able to talk and share their thoughts and feelings.

Maendy Primary School has a policy of partnership between home and school, but with child abuse, or suspicion of child abuse, our first and only responsibility is to the child. This may mean that parents are not informed or consulted in some instances. We may not be able to prevent child abuse, but by following child protection procedures, we are trying our best to protect all our children and this is our first and only responsibility.

All teachers make sure, through their care of children, to try to ensure that children keep safe, remain healthy and are able to say "NO". Suspected cases are reported, procedures adhered to and subsequent actions are left to the appropriate agencies. We also care for children who have been abused and understand their problems.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Aims**

Maendy Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. There are seven main elements to our policy:-

1. The School aims to provide pupils with relevant information, skills and attitudes to help them to resist abuse and prepare for the responsibilities of adult life including home and family. Together with

these skills we hope that pupils will feel confident they can confide in staff on issues of neglect, abuse and deprivation.

2. To allow staff to be familiar and confident with the appropriate child protection procedures and issues. This policy is intended to give clear guidance to all staff, teaching & non-teaching on:
  - i. the signs that may indicate the possibility of abuse;
  - ii. the procedures to follow if a child discloses abuse or a member of staff suspects abuse.
3. To work with parents to build an understanding of the School's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require cases to be referred to other investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure.
4. To monitor children who have been identified as 'at risk'.
5. To contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies and schools - thereby contributing towards a more effective detection of the incidence of child abuse.
6. To review the School procedures and improve the way child protection issues are managed.
7. Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.

## **OBJECTIVES**

These objectives relate directly to the 7 aims of this Child Protection Policy at Maendy Primary School and are intended to show how the aims are actually put into practice.

- i. The skills will be delivered through the Curriculum and especially via PSE. We include, in the Curriculum/PSE programmes information on personal safety, including eSafety.
- 1i. We try to create an environment and ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and they are listened to.
- iii. We provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults whom they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
- iv. Staff treat the children with respect and all pupils are expected to treat each other and staff with respect.
- v. We try to impress upon pupils the importance of rejecting violence as a means of resolving conflict.
- vi. We regularly review and evaluate our school policies and practices of social control and behaviour modification.
- vii. We raise awareness of radicalisation and have a reporting strategy in place.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. Learning support assistants, mid-day supervisors, caretakers, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child.

## **PREVENTION**

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention. The school will therefore:-

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSE which equip children with the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

## **PROCEDURES**

We will follow the procedures set out in guidance produced by our Local Safeguarding Children Board. which are in line with the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. Maendy Primary School will:-

- Ensure it has a designated senior member of staff, who has undertaken the appropriate training and support provided by the local authority.

- Recognise the role of the designated person and arrange support and training.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers ) receive training through the induction process and receive full training every 3 years by the Headteacher who is an accredited L1 child protection trainer. There is also training provided at the first staff meeting of every new academic year to remind staff of the requirements (Appendix 1); staff sign an agreement which forms part of the annual job description to say that they have received training and that they will adhere to the policy:-
- The name of the designated person and their role;
- That they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales agreed with the Local Safeguarding Children Board which is immediately following disclosure from a child or if they have identified a concern;
- Know how to take forward those concerns where the designated person is unavailable.
- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a pupil who may tell of abuse.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligation in the school prospectus.
- Provide training for all staff so that they know:-  
their personal responsibility, the agreed local procedures, the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse, how to support a child who tells of abuse, the forms to use to record concerns (Appendix 2, Appendix 3 for concerns regarding eSafety).
- Notify the local Social Welfare team if:  
it should have to exclude a pupil on the child protection register for a fixed term or permanently.
- If there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days duration from school (or one day following a weekend).
- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to social services immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations,
- Adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government guidance circular "Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from working with Children in the Education Sector"
- Designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the school's child protection policy and practice. Mrs A Webb is the designated governor.

### **SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK**

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. This school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum to encourage self esteem and self motivation.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued. (The school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupil in the school.
- All staff will agree on a consistent approach which focuses on the inappropriate behaviour but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth.
- The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but he/she is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.)
- Liaison with other agencies who support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services and the Education Welfare Officer.
- Keeping records and notifying Social Services as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.
- When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, we will transfer information to the new school immediately and inform Social Services.

## WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

**Neglect:** The persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger including cold and starvation) which results in serious impairment of the child's health and development. Failure to thrive.

**Physical Abuse:** Physical injury to a child including deliberate poisoning burns and scalds, where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

**Sexual Abuse:** The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

**Emotional Abuse:** The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection.

## WHAT ACTION DO I TAKE IF I SUSPECT A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED?

Staff must:

Remember that the priority is to protect the child and treat the matter seriously.

Receive the child's story if appropriate, listen and use the 'window of opportunity' to ask appropriate questions.

React to what the child tells you with belief and tell the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.

Indicate to the child what action you will take and make it clear that you will have to inform others (no secrets).

Keep an accurate record of what you have become aware of and what you have done (Appendix 2 or 3)

Staff must report any Child Protection concerns to a designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) immediately. They must not share this information with any person but a designated CPO.

Should a member of staff share Child Protection information with another member of staff then that person must also report the information to the designated CPO. No person must take the responsibility from the original informer - they must tell them to report but they must also do so themselves.

Staff must not:

Contact the parents - this is the job of Social Welfare.

Interrogate the child if that child has disclosed information or ask leading questions.

Speak to anyone about whom allegations are made (including colleagues).

Promise to keep secrets/confidentiality.

Lift or pull down clothing to examine the child.

Ask a child outright if they or others have suffered abuse.

Remember trust your own judgement and intuition and act on it in order to safeguard the child - if there is any doubt you must report to a CPO.

It is the Designated CPO who will assess the situation and decide whether to inform the statutory authorities.

## **Immediate response to the child**

It is vital that our actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries, for example:

- Listen to the pupil, if you are shocked by what is being said try not to show it
- It is OK to observe bruises but not to ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them
- If a disclosure is made the pace should be dictated by the pupil without them being pressed for detail by being asked such questions as "what did they do next?" or "where did they touch you?". It is our role to listen not to investigate. Use open questions such as "is there anything else you want to tell me?" or "yes?" or "and?"
- Accept what the pupil says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking questions such as "why didn't you tell me before?"
- Do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this
- Don't criticise the perpetrator, this may be someone they love
- **Don't promise confidentiality**, reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing, explain whom you will have to tell (the designated CPO and why. It is important that you don't make promises that you cannot keep such as "I'll stay with you all the time" or "it will be alright now"

### **Recording Information**

- Make some brief notes at the time or immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumption and interpretation (there is a proforma specifically for this (Appendix 2).
- Note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the pupil (do not translate into "proper terms").
- This proforma must be passed to the designated CPO.

### **Actions to be taken by Designated CPO in cases of suspected child abuse.**

Assess the situation immediately. If assessment confirms suspicions contact the Team Leader at Social Welfare. Following verbal referral, the Social Services Team Leader will decide on appropriate action to take. Phoned referrals should be followed up by a written statement which can be faxed or emailed.

Note: Designated CPOs may discuss the case with other professionals within the local child protection network prior to making the official referral as long as this does not place the child at further risk or unnecessarily delay the referral.

### **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

This is intended as a guide. Please remember that the presence of one or more factors does not necessarily give proof that child abuse has occurred. It may, however, indicate that investigation should take place.

- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment which is needed
- Incompatible explanations
- Constant minor injuries
- Unexplained bruising: Bruise marks in or around mouth, black eyes, especially if both eyes are black and there are no marks to forehead or nose, grasp marks, finger marks, bruising of the ears, linear bruising (buttocks or back, differing age bruising
- Bite marks
- Burns and scalds, cigarette burns
- General physical disability
- Unresponsiveness in the child
- Soiling and wetting
- Change in behavioural pattern
- "Frozen" look
- Attention seeking
- Apprehension
- Antisocial behaviour
- Unkempt appearance
- Sexually precocious behaviour, sexualised drawings and play
- Sudden poor performance in school, poor self esteem
- Self mutilation
- Withdrawal
- Running away, resistance to return home after school
- Resistance to PE (undressing )
- Difficulty in forming relationships
- Confusing affectionate displays
- Poor attendance-repeated infections etc

### **Allegations Against School Staff**

Staff must protect themselves and should bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. It is important not to touch pupils however casually, in ways or on parts of the body that might be considered indecent. Staff should not lift or pull down clothing and parents will be contacted if this is necessary. When pupils make such an allegation against a member of staff, All Wales Child protection Procedures must be followed.

In the case of suspected or identified abuse of a child by a member of staff, the police and/or Social Welfare have a duty to investigate. National guidelines have been produced and the first person to receive an allegation regarding a Headteacher should take it directly to the next Designated CPO and through them to the Chair of Governors or in their absence the vice Chair. At this stage, after hearing a child's allegation, no discussion should be initiated by school staff with the Headteacher.

### **CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. All members of staff who deal with children with moderate or profound disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairment, speech/language difficulties, emotional and behaviour difficulties will be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

### **SAFEGUARDING:**

All pupils and staff are made aware of the need to safeguard the school community as a whole, and the procedures are identified fully in the school's Health and safety Policy. Safeguarding procedures are discussed regularly at governor and staff meetings; a health and safety audit and risk assessment of the school premises and grounds are conducted by the Headteacher, nominated Governor for Health & Safety Ms H Warren and the school caretaker Mr K Dillon.

### **AWARENESS RAISING OF PREVENT**

Prevent is safeguarding and aims to:

- Prevent people from becoming radicalised
- Prevent people from supporting terrorism and becoming a terrorist themselves
- Prevent people from expressing feelings of injustice by causing harm to themselves or others

### **Counter Terrorism Strategy**

The Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy known as '**CONTEST**'. CONTEST is based around four principles known as the 'Four Ps':

- **Pursue** terrorists wherever they are and stop terrorist attacks
- **Prevent** people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism
- **Protect** the UK by strengthening our defences against terrorism
- **Prepare** to respond to an attack to lessen its impact

School based staff received training on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 and again on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2017; the aims and objectives of the training were to:

- Understand Prevent's aims
- Consider who may be vulnerable to terrorism
- Understand why people may be influenced to commit crimes
- Recognise when a vulnerable person may need their help
- Understand what help and support is available and with whom they should share concerns
- To understand their responsibility under the Prevent duty

### **Vulnerability to Radicalisation**

Radicalisation is the process by which someone has their vulnerabilities or susceptibilities exploited towards crime or terrorism.

### **Emotional Indicators**

Short tempered, withdrawn, new found arrogance, confidence, anger, moody, secretive, outspoken, passion, etc.

### **Verbal Indicators**

Fixated on a subject, change in language/ new vocabulary, inappropriate questions, more opinionated, new interests, suddenly more vocal, etc.

### **Physical Indicators**

Tattoos, use of internet, appearance (weight, clothing, self-harm, new friendship group, routine (missing, not attending school/college/work), remove self from family and previous friends, invisible friends, symbolism (badges, tattoos, clothing, stickers, posters), literature etc.

### **Raising Awareness of Pupils and Parents**

The School Council organised materials to raise awareness as part of their role during 2016/17. This resulted in a parent governor revising a WG letter, which was sent to parents. These materials have been shared with parents, and will be available on the school's website (Appendix 5).

### **Reporting Concerns**

Concerns should be reported to the school's designated officers, using the school's proforma for Child Protection concerns (Appendix 2 or 3). If the Officer decides that a referral is required, the proforma (Appendix 4) will be used.

### **Complying with Duty**

Schools, registered early years providers, registered pupil referral units, and providers of holiday schemes for disabled children are contained within the list of educational providers who must comply the duty.

### **Requirements of the Duty**

- Undertake a risk assessment (completed)
- Establish new or use existing mechanisms for safeguarding (completed)
- Demonstrate awareness and understanding of the risks of radicalisation (All staff trained in PREVENT and the Headteacher as Designated PREVENT Lead has shared process for referrals with school's 2 other Safe Guarding Officers).
- Ensure that staff understand the risk (All staff trained on return to school in the Autumn Term).
- Communicate and promote the importance of the Duty and ensure staff implement effectively (eSafety Team are tasked to review Risk assessment requirements during 2017/18).

### **Further Information can be obtained from the Community Safety Team**

- Karen Kerslake
- Catherine Jones
- Sarah Gwynn
- Kelly Williams

Email : [CommunitySafetyTeam@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:CommunitySafetyTeam@torfaen.gov.uk)

Tel: (01495) 762200 and asking for the Community Safety Team.

**This Policy was introduced in September 2009 and is revised annually.**

**Appendix 1**

**Annual Child Protection reminder Training**

**Child Abuse**

There are 4 categories of child abuse:

Physical

Emotional

Sexual

Neglect

How might we recognise signs of child abuse in a school setting?

Physical	Emotional
Sexual	Neglect

What do I think I should do if I have **any** concerns regarding the possible abuse of a child?

Who is the designated Child Protection Officer for Maendy School?

What if the designated Child Protection Officer is not in school?

What if a child discloses information to you and asks you not to tell anyone?

What can I expect once I have shared my concerns with the designated Child Protection Officer?

## Child Protection Procedures at Maendy School

1. Be aware of the 4 different categories of child abuse.
  2. If you have **any** concerns regarding child abuse please inform the designated Child Protection Officer(CPO) **immediately**. Do not share the information with anyone except a designated CPO. Staff have been trained to use the proforma which was introduced in November 2014. If any person shares such information with anyone else, then that person is also required to inform a designated CPO immediately.
  3. Always explain to a child that you may need to inform someone else in school if they make a disclosure which causes concern for their well being or safety.
  4. It is recommended that teachers/support staff keep a diary of concerns. What is recorded as a minor incident may develop into a broader picture.
  5. The designated CPO listens to all concerns and makes a decision as to whether the child needs to be referred to Social Welfare under the category of Child in Need or Child Protection.
  6. If the designated CPO decides that a referral is necessary:
    - A referral form is completed and faxed to Social Welfare.
    - The original referral form is then kept in the Child Protection Record File
    - A short note describing the referral is then placed in the Diary of Referrals and signed.
- All Child Protection information is stored in a lockable cabinet in the Headteacher's office. The CPO must always report back to the person who shared the concern, stating if a referral was made or not. The person needs no further involvement. If a social worker and police officer attends school they have the right to speak to a child without parental permission, the designated CPO must speak to them before allowing contact with the child. The CPO must ask the child if they would like them to stay with them during the interview- no other staff member should be present.
7. The CPO will become part of a core- group that monitors the situation if there are issues to be addressed.
  8. All staff sign an agreement annually to fully commit to these procedures in their job descriptions and following their annual training,
  9. The Induction process for new staff includes Child Protection training.

**Appendix 2**

**Child Protection (Introduced 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014)**

1<sup>st</sup> CPO to inform: D Baker, 2<sup>nd</sup> CPO: S Thomas, 3<sup>rd</sup> CPO: J Cresswell

Person Reporting to CPO	
Date	
Time	
Children involved(full name/s)	
Class teacher	
Initial concern/Disclosure (Use actual words used by pupil)  Place of disclosure  Was anyone else present at the time of disclosure? Y/N If yes who?  Demeanour of the child	
If other staff were involved what did you discuss?	
Window of opportunity (gather as much information as is reasonable at this point) eg: When?  Where?  Who?  How?  Was anyone else there?	
Are there any visible injuries?  (Describe them/Ask how )	
Ask if they have any other injuries (Write down response)	

Please complete reverse of sheet also

Describe the child's presentation

Is the child wear appropriate clothing?

Any attendance/lateness concerns?

Does the child relate well to adults?

Does the child have any friends?

Do you have any other information that may be useful?



### Appendix 3

Dear pupils, parents and carers, staff and members of the wider school community,

#### **Report of an E-Safety Concern**

(Introduced Autumn 2015 & ratified by School Council)

If you have a concern over any aspect of E-Safety, please complete this form and return it to a member of staff who will pass it on to a member of the school's E-Safety Team.

Name	
Date	
Time	
What is your concern?	
Please give names if you can Where were you when you became concerned worried? Who else was there?	
Who else knows about this?	
If you think that someone may be upset, please can you provide give their name?	
Could anyone be at risk in danger because of this?	

Thank you for completing this form!

Mr Morgan, Mrs Cresswell, Mr Baker, Mrs Rosser and Mrs Dillon, and Mrs Brown (The E-Safety Team).

Action taken:	
By Whom:	
Date:	

**Appendix 4**

**GPMS - Please select**

**Partnership - PREVENT Referral document**

**Please complete all of the form, clearly detailing your reasons for referral.**

Agency/Partner making referral [i.e. Education, Health etc]

Details of person referring:

**Personal Details:**

Surname/Family name:

Forename(s):

Date of birth:

Gender: Please select

Ethnicity: Please select

Self Defined Ethnicity: Please select

Place of birth:

Country of birth:

Religion: Please select

Alias name(s) / date of birth:

Nickname(s):

Address:

Telephone number(s): Home:

Mobile:

Email address:

**Reason for referral:**

Detail in full vulnerability and causes, why the subject is suitable for Prevent intervention, if radicalised, state how, e.g. Internet, education, family/ associates and also if the individual has difficulties integrating into society.

**Please complete the below regarding the subject:**

**Agencies Current Involvement** (details of any other agencies you know are involved with the individual).

**Name of Education Provision Attended:**

**Mental Health issues?**

Y  N  Unknown

Please detail:

**Substance misuse?**

Y  N  Unknown

Please detail:

**Employed?**  Y  N  Unknown

**Student**  Y  N  Unknown

Please detail:

**Education history / University dropout?**

Please detail:

**Attendance at Places of Interest/Worship?**  Y  N  Unknown  
(Please specify with address):

**Children?**  Y  N  Unknown  
If yes, please specify number and ages:

**What support network, if any, does this individual have? [i.e. family, wife, girlfriend]**

**Criminal history?**  Y  N  Unknown  
If yes, please specify:

**History of violence/ honour based violence?**  Y  N  Unknown  
If yes, please specify:

**Any other information**

**Please return the completed form to Community Safety Team, Public Services Support Unit, TCBC.**

**Email: [CommunitySafetyTeam@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:CommunitySafetyTeam@torfaen.gov.uk)**

**Tel: (01495) 762200 and asking for the Community Safety Team.**

## THE PREVENT STRATEGY - INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

### Introduction

With many children being curious about what they see on the news and on the internet, radicalisation and extremist views may be a topic that your child is already aware of, or may have questions about.

The Welsh Government has asked all schools in Wales to inform parents of the **Prevent Strategy**. Whilst extremist views and radicalisation may not be a big issue in some parts of Wales, we as a school, are obliged to share this strategy with parents in order that everyone is kept fully informed of what measures are in place. The Prevent Strategy is intended to equip parents to deal with any questions that they or their child may have, and to provide access to help should it ever be needed.

### What is the Prevent strategy?

Prevent is a government strategy designed to stop people from supporting terrorist or extremist causes.

The Prevent strategy covers all types of terrorism and extremism, including the extreme right wing, violent religious groups and other causes.

### How does the Prevent strategy apply to schools?

From July 2015 all schools (as well as other organisations) have a duty to safeguard children from radicalisation and extremism. This means that schools have a responsibility to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same way they protect them from, for example, drugs or gang violence. Importantly, schools can provide a safe place for pupils to discuss issues so they better understand how to protect themselves.

### What are schools doing already?

Many of the things schools already do to help children become positive, happy members of society also contribute to the Prevent strategy.

These include:

- Exploring other cultures and religions and promoting diversity
- Challenging prejudices and racist comments
- Developing critical thinking skills and a strong, positive self-identity
- Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, and values such as democracy, the rule of law and mutual respect

Schools will also protect children for example by using filters on the internet to make sure they can't access extremist and terrorist material, or by vetting visitors who go into school to work with pupils.

Different schools will carry out the Prevent duty in different ways, depending on the age of the children and the needs of the community.

### Isn't my child too young to learn about extremism?

The Prevent strategy is not just about discussing extremism itself, which may not be appropriate for younger children. It is also about teaching children about tolerance and mutual respect. The school will make sure any discussions are suitable for the age and maturity of the children involved.

### Is extremism really a risk in Wales?

Extremism can take many forms, including far right views, animal rights activism, and various forms of religious extremism. Some of these may be a threat in Wales.

### **Should I be worried?**

The chances of you being affected are small. Most people will never support violent extremism or terrorism and the amount of children or young people who become involved is low. However we all need to be vigilant and the best way to protect children and young people is to stop it before it happens.

### **So what can I do?**

It is the job of everyone to prevent the radicalisation of young people. Parents, teachers, friends and family all have a part to play in making sure that extremist ideas are challenged.

As a parent you are the main influence on your child's identity, particularly when they are young, so this is the time to reinforce positive messages to them about being comfortable with who they are.

You might want to try some of the following:

- Talking can help your child to develop informed and balanced views. Be willing to have open and honest discussions about their thoughts and feelings on local and international events. Not allowing them to talk about topics like this can increase their curiosity and draw them into finding out more in other ways e.g. via the internet.
- As they get older children naturally start to look for a separate identity. At this stage teenagers may become confused about who they are and where they fit in society. Extremists exploit this confusion with a negative, distorted focus on one aspect of young people's identity at the expense of all others. Offer reassurance. Make sure they know it's all right to be confused and that they can always come to you for guidance.
- Teach your child that expressing strong views and trying to change things for the better is fine but that they should not take violent action against others or support those that do.
- Talk to your child about what they see on the TV or the internet and explain that what they see or read may not be the whole picture. Help your child to understand the dangers of becoming involved when they may not have the full information.
- Encourage your child to show an interest in the local community and show respect for people from all backgrounds.
- The internet is one way young people connect with or are targeted by extremists who want to exploit them. Remind your child that the people they contact over the internet may not be who they say they are and may be telling them things that are not true. Stay alert for potential warning signs like increased secrecy and explain to them that anyone who tells them to keep secrets from their family or teachers is likely to be trying to do them harm or put them in danger.

Remember, protecting children from extremist influences is a team effort so if you are concerned about anything get some advice and support. Parents are often the first to notice worrying changes in their child's behaviour, but it's hard to deal with these issues alone.

If you are worried:

- Talk to your child's teacher or another person in school that you trust.
- You can also receive support and advice from your local police by telephoning 101 or Crime stoppers on 0800 555111. They will treat the matter confidentially and will do all they can to help to prevent your child turning to behaviour that breaks the law.

**Remember: asking for help won't get your child into trouble; it could save them from harm.**

#### **KEY TERMS**

**Extremism** – *vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs*

**Ideology** – *a set of beliefs*

**Terrorism** – *a violent action against people or property, designed to create fear and advance a political, religious or ideological cause*

**Radicalisation** – *the process by which a person comes to support extremism and terrorism*

#### **USEFUL RESOURCES**

[www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)

*Website has lots of information advice and resources to help children stay safe online*

[www.educateagainsthate.com](http://www.educateagainsthate.com)

*Gives practical advice to parents and teachers on how to protect children and young people from radicalisation and extremism*