



PREVENT 2026



WHAT SHOULD SCHOOLS BE THINKING ABOUT NOW

The Department for Education had updated its Prevent guidance for education settings (published 24th September 2026). Here are the points for schools:



Key Messages



- 1 PREVENT = SAFEGUARDING**
Prevent is delivered through safeguarding. It should sit within your **wider safeguarding arrangements**, policies and procedures – not as a separate initiative.



- 2 LOOK AT THE WHOLE PICTURE**
Consider behaviour alongside the wider **context**, including the individual's circumstances, experiences, relationships and environment. Avoid focusing on isolated incidents and look for **patterns or changes** over time.



- 3 RISK + PROTECTION**
Consider the individual's **vulnerabilities and protective factors**. This includes their family, peers, community, life experiences, identity, wellbeing and access to supportive relationships and services.



- 4 ONLINE & OFFLINE**
Consider **online influences** alongside **offline circumstances**. This includes exposure to harmful content, online networks, social media, as well as what is happening in school, at home and in the wider community.



- 5 RECORD THE RATIONALE**
Record concerns, information gathering, discussions, advice received, actions taken and the **rationale for decisions**, including why a decision not to refer was made.



- 6 KNOW WHEN TO REFER**
Make a Prevent referral if there are concerns that a child or young person may be susceptible to radicalisation or at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Do not delay a referral while trying to prove that radicalisation has already taken place.

DON'T MISS THIS

SEND & NEURODIVERSITY

SEND and neurodiversity are **not indicators** of radicalisation in themselves. Consider individual needs, communication, understanding and additional vulnerabilities.

NO SINGLE INDICATOR

There is **no single behaviour, profile or indicator** of radicalisation. Look at patterns, changes over time and the wider context, using professional judgement and available evidence.

NOT THE ROUTE FOR EVERYTHING

Prevent is **not the route for every concerning behaviour**. Other safeguarding pathways (e.g. early help, child protection, mental health, criminal exploitation) may be more appropriate depending on the concern.



Based on DfE Prevent practical guidance – Updated 24th September 2026.