

*Irthington Village School*

*Extremism & Radicalisation - A Guide for Parents.*

*November 2017*

**Introduction.**

As a parent you may be worried about how extremism and radicalisation might affect your child especially with media 'headline' scaremongering. We have put together this brief document to help you understand more about extremism and radicalisation, and how you can deal with these issues should the need arise.

**What are extremism and radicalisation?**

Any idea can be taken to an extreme, but the type of extremism that this document looks at is when ideas and opinions lead on to violence. We often hear on the news of young people that have been radicalised and drawn into terrorist groups, but what does that mean? Currently, it is the threat imposed by so called Islamic state (ISIS) which is most in the news. However, in terms of protecting young children, it is important to recognise that in the wrong hands, any idea or belief can be taken to an extreme.

**Should I be worried as a parent?**

Despite the high levels of media attention given to these issues, the chances of them affecting you as a parent are very low. It is important to remember that the most people will never support terrorism and that the amount of young people that become involved in violent extremism is very small. You know your child better than anyone else, and are best placed to notice any changes in their behaviour. Talk to someone if you have concerns. You can receive support and advice from your local police by telephoning **101 or Crime stoppers on 0800 555111**. They will treat the matter with total confidence and will do all they can to help to prevent your child turning to behavior that breaks the law. 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. Unfortunately, there isn't a checklist of what makes someone become an extremist, every individual is unique. But remember Young people want to push the boundaries. They are searching for an identity in a confusing world. Encouraging young people to learn about and understand alternative points of view is an essential role of a parent.

**What is the government doing about extremism and radicalisation?**

The government recently introduced a law to make it compulsory for places such as schools and hospitals to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

**The Prevent Strategy and Channel Duty.**

The Prevent strategy aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. While it remains rare for children and young people to become involved in terrorist activity, young people from an early

age can be exposed to terrorist & extremist influences or prejudiced views, early intervention is always preferable. Schools, working with other local partners, families and communities, play a key role in ensuring young people and their communities are safe from the threat of terrorism.

***'Schools should be safe spaces in which children and young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of the terrorist ideology and learn how to challenge these ideas. The 2014 Government extremism task force identified risks around radicalisation within educational institutions and it is important that Prevent is actively supporting these institutions to protect children from harm and ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and British values.'***

***'Social media is an increasingly influential part of life particularly for young people. It has been identified as an important tool in the sharing of extreme material and extremist groups are actively using social media to inform, share propaganda, radicalise and recruit for their cause. Social media safeguarding is an important element of protecting young people from extremist narratives and Prevent can play an active part in this process.'***

Channel is a key element of the Prevent strategy. It is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners (such as the education and health sectors, social services, children's and youth services and offender management services), the police and the local community to:

- Identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism
- Assess the nature and extent of that risk
- Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned. Channel is about safeguarding children and adults from being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity. It is about early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before illegality occurs. Channel is one tactical option employed by Prevent and has recently been placed on a statutory footing.

This means that frontline staff are working hard to ensure that young people are protected from extremism and radicalisation.