What role is the local authority playing in this implementation?

As you might expect, Ealing Council is a ‘specified authority’ under the legislation, and it has a duty to map its services to determine what policies or procedures need to be adapted to comply. We also have a duty to train staff that come into contact with the public or assess risk. Some of that work will be to work in partnership with schools and support them with good practice information and training wherever possible.

At the moment two members of staff are specialising in this work, supported by our school effectiveness and safeguarding staff.

When will this work be completed?

The Home Office are expecting a steady, incremental implementation process. However we have looked at the current risks and for that reason have chosen to offer training workshops to high schools in the first instance, with the same offer being made to primary schools later this spring.

Our Prevent staff are constructing a short implementation plan now and we hope to produce a solid progress report by March 2016. Because of the turnover of staff and the emergence of good practice, we anticipate that training will feature consistently for the foreseeable future.

What are the implications for OFSTED inspections?

As a local authority, we would not wish to impinge on the duties of the Department for Education or OFSTED. Prevent staff do however have regular, informal meetings with OFSTED inspectors.

We understand that the principles contained within the Act are already contained within the inspection framework and OFSTED are looking for the legislation to be absorbed into the everyday ethos of the school and the principles forming an intrinsic part of the curriculum, wherever possible. They are not looking for the Act to be seen as a ‘bolt on’ or annex to subjects. We hope that the WRAP workshops recently delivered make a contribution to schools implementation plans.

What does ‘having due regard’ mean?

‘Having due regard’ means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

A glossary of terms is appended to the Prevent duty guidance (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance)
The legislation asks schools to ‘assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism’. What will that mean?

No Government template or format has been produced to support this demand, but the Prevent team already have an analysis document that they use locally, and we hope to adapt that to give you a broad understanding of the risk in your area. Prevent staff will also be suggesting how a template can be used to articulate any local risks applicable to the school.

What is the risk locally?

To a certain extent, the local risk reflects the risk nationally and even internationally. At the moment the broad risk to young people surrounds internet radicalisation (sometimes referred to self-radicalisation), exposure to radicalisers through peer networks, and of course the risks associated with travel to foreign conflicts. This is especially impacting on young girls who are being drawn into virtual slavery in Syria and Iraq, where rape and exploitation is now an accepted part of life within fighting groups.

Any assessment completed in conjunction with a school will of course, be much more detailed.

Do you consider that we need to write new safeguarding policies to cope with the risk of radicalisation?

No.

In our opinion, existing safeguarding policies need to be utilised. At the moment, the pan London child protection procedures are being reviewed and we anticipate that risk assessment templates will also be published.

School specific procedures might not change, but extremism will be absorbed into the suite of risks that need to be considered.

How will schools make sure that staff have the right training?

The need to maintain designated safeguarding staff will not change, and the basic WRAP training will continue to be offered to schools by Prevent staff, either as ‘whole school’ training or through the ESCB website that has WRAP training dates listed.

All designated safeguarding staff training now has a ‘Prevent’ element in it and of course, briefings for local school procedures will continue in house.

Council Prevent staff are looking to identify products that provide higher level training for staff and in some cases, workshops for pupils.

Where can I get advice about general matters or specific cases?

Through your designated safeguarding lead or the Prevent team at Ealing Council. There are no forms to submit. The Prevent staff welcome informal contact in relation to generic issues or specific cases where evidence of vulnerability is suspected.