

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Schools Risk Assessment Model – guidance notes

Introduction

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

Schools, as a ‘specified authority, are expected to **assess the risk** of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology’.

This should be based on an understanding of the potential risk in the local area.

The guidance issued in 2019¹ in relation to the act also sets out an expectation that local authorities will use the existing counter-terrorism local profiles (CTLPs), produced for every region by the police, to assess the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism. This includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit.

The 2019 guidance states that Local Authority risk assessments should be informed by engagement with a range of local partners including schools.

This duty represents the first time that schools have needed to consider this issue in a legislative framework, and schools have asked for assistance in order to discharge this duty, using a simple, common sense approach.

The Schools Risk Assessment Model is designed to provide

- A modular way to outline and reduce the impact of risks in a particular school
- A profile of risks which are in context of the potential risks in the local area
- The ability to understand developments that might be needed in policy or procedural areas of school business.
- An illustration of the whole approach for staff and governance groups.

The document is not designed to replace existing risk assessments but can be integrated into those existing documents or used as an appendix to existing documents.

The use of the document is not mandatory and it does not represent Council policy – it is a format that, in the absence of national recommendations can be used to illustrate and manage risk either as a stand-alone document or in conjunction with other tools.

¹ GOV UK (2019) Prevent Duty Guidance [Accessed via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>]

Schools Risk Assessment Model – areas for completion.

School profile

As this section suggests, the profile is intended to provide an introduction to the school and contain a broad overview of its demographics, values and ethos with a short description of its challenges.

Borough Situational Analysis.

(Contact the Ealing Prevent Team for information)

A profile of School based risks

This section gives the school an opportunity to outline a description of previous challenges dealt with in this area of work and the processes used to resolve them. For some schools, this will be difficult as they may not have an accurate record of incidents but they will be able to explain the current recording systems and procedures for safeguarding or conflict resolution.

School strategies, Policies and Procedures.

This section is simply a shortlist of existing policies or procedures that are directly reducing the risk in this context or are designed to contribute to that reduction. It should contain the name of the author or policy holder and its review date.

The school template of specific risks

A template has been provided that has successfully been used in some Universities across the UK.

It has been populated with examples for illustration only.

This template is designed to act as an instrument for improvement and change and follows a well-known format which gives the school an opportunity to declare foreseeable risk, to 'score' it and to outline its corporate response.

It also provides a useful record of actions and continuing progress for management and governance groups.