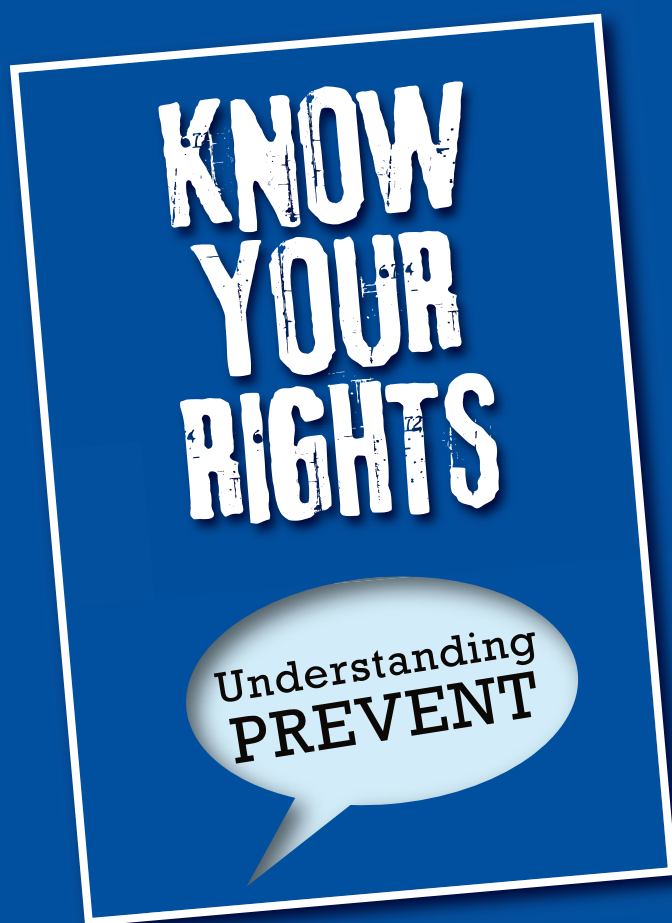


Prevent Resource Pack



This resource pack is to help parents question the implementation of the Prevent policy at their children's school, to ask for transparency in how it operates and to push for greater caution in its implementation.

The resource pack contains the following information:

- 1. What is Prevent**
- 2. Prevent in action**
- 3. Sample letter to send to head teacher**

If you would like to discuss your specific concerns about Prevent or require more detailed information please please contact IHRC on 020 8904 4222 or visit IHRC's resource page here

[http://ihrc.org.uk/activities/projects/11472-the-prevent-strategy-campaign-resources.](http://ihrc.org.uk/activities/projects/11472-the-prevent-strategy-campaign-resources)

What is Prevent?

Prevent is part of the government's strategy to prevent extremism. It means every doctor, nurse, teacher, university lecturer, social worker, and every other public service provider has to look for signs of extremism in members of the public. They are essentially spies for the government.

What is Extremism?

- **It is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values***
- **It can be violent or non-violent;**
- **It can also be calling for the death of members of the British armed forces.**

* 'Fundamental British values' = democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. There are many other things that are being added to this list as and when it suits the government.

Key problems with Prevent:

- It restricts any types of dissent or opposition to the government.
- It breaks down the relationship of trust between doctor and patient, teacher and student, etc.
- The intention is to prevent acts of terrorism, but there is no evidence to show that 'extremist ideas' lead to an individual committing an act of terrorism.
- It criminalises Muslims as the government sees Islam as 'extreme' at its core. Anyone who practices Islam or 'looks Muslim' can therefore be seen as an extremist.
- It does not account for the government's own violence (e.g. in its foreign policy), which is often referenced by convicted terrorists as the main reason they are driven to their actions.
- It creates fear within Muslim communities, further isolating them from wider society.

What happens if you are identified as at risk of engaging in extremism?

- Your teacher/doctor/social worker/etc will contact your local Prevent Officer. He or she will either work for your local council or be a police officer.
- You will be contacted by the Prevent Officer or a police officer. They may visit your home/workplace/school.
- If your child is identified, the Prevent Officer/police officer may make contact with your child at school without informing you first.
- In all instances, they will want to ask you questions. They may ask you about your religion, your religious practices, what you think about Israel, what you think of terrorists, what you think of gay rights, etc. It will seem like a conversation rather than an interrogation.
- If you/your child are deemed at risk then you/your child will be put through Channel. This is a non-compulsory deradicalisation programme, where you/your child will be monitored by the police, have regular meetings with your Prevent Officer, possibly attend workshops.

What should you do if you are targeted?

You do not have to speak to any Prevent Officer or police officer (unless the latter detains you). If you are approached in the street/your school/home etc you should refuse to speak without a lawyer present.

Remember: if you are being singled out under the Prevent programme it means you have not committed a criminal offence, and therefore you do not need to engage with them.

- Once you are approached by an officer under Prevent you should contact a solicitor straight away, preferably one who specialises in human rights. Contact IHRC for a referral if necessary.
- Even if you have not been singled out we recommend you try to understand how Prevent is being implemented in your organisation / child's school etc. Contact IHRC for help with this.
- If you belong to a union it is important to push for a union-wide boycott of Prevent, which will go some way to protecting those who are being targeted.

Please be aware that the government is trying to make these guidelines even more oppressive, so some of this information is subject to change.

If your employer or educational institution wishes to "informally" discuss any Prevent related issues, ensure that you have someone with you at the meeting, e.g union rep, friend etc.

Should an Officer appear during any meeting, ask them to identify themselves and the reason for their attendance. Refuse to answer questions until you have spoken to a lawyer.

Contact IHRC for further information:
020 8904 4222 / info@ihrc.org

Examples of Prevent in action:

1 Nursery staff suggested referring a four-year-old boy to a counter- terrorism project after he mispronounced the word "cucumber". Concerns were raised by the nursery in Luton when the boy drew a picture of a man cutting a cucumber and mispronounced it as "cooker bomb".

[Read full story here¹.](#)

2 An 8-year-old boy from east London was referred to social services for wearing a T-shirt that said: "I want to be like Abu Bakr al-Siddique". Abu Bakr al-Siddique is a historical figure believed to be a disciple of the Prophet Muhammad and is beloved by many Muslims . The referral under Prevent stated that he wore a t-shirt stating that he 'loved Abu Bakr al Baghdadi' (considered the leader of ISIS). During a visit from social services to investigate, the social worker asked questions such as, 'Do Christians go to hell?' Police visited the child's home and Saturday school.

[Read full story here².](#)

3 A primary school reported a ten-year-old Muslim boy to police on suspicion of extremism after he complained about not having a prayer room. He also told female Muslim pupils they needed to cover their faces with a head scarf. The school referred the boy to police under Prevent as this was perceived as a sign of extremism.

[Read full story here³.](#)

4 Schoolchildren in the UK who search for words such as "caliphate" and the names of Muslim political activists on classroom computers risk being flagged as potential 'extremists' by monitoring software being marketed to teachers to help them spot students at risk of radicalisation. The "radicalisation keywords" library has been developed to help schools comply with their Prevent duties.

[Read full story here⁴.](#)

5 A 14-year-old Muslim schoolboy was questioned about the Islamic State after using the word 'l'ecoterrorisme' (which he learned in a previous lesson) during a French classroom discussion about environmental activism. A few days later he was pulled out of class and questioned whether he was affiliated to ISIS. It was later established that those questioning him were child protection officers who were

acting out their Prevent duty. Despite requiring parental consent before speaking to the boy, his parents were not informed of this interview.

[Read full story here⁵.](#)

- 6** Buxton Primary School in London were accused of implementing a discriminatory Prevent practice that was intending to collect the data of Year 5 and 6 pupils in order to assess whether they were extremists. This was done without parental consent.

[Read full story here⁶.](#)

Sample Letter

YOUR NAME
ADDRESS 1
CITY/TOWN
POSTCODE

DATE

HEAD TEACHER NAME
SCHOOL NAME
ADDRESS 1
CITY/TOWN
POSTCODE

RE Prevent in the school

Dear [Name of Head Teacher],

I am concerned about what I have heard in the news about children across the country being reported under the Prevent programme for questionable reasons. I have heard of multiple instances, such as the teenager who was referred for wearing a 'Free Palestine' badge and another very young child referred for

saying 'cucumber' which was wrongly heard as 'cooker bomb.' In light of this as well as acknowledgement from organisations like the National Union of Teachers that Prevent is hugely problematic, I hope you will take my concerns on board.

As a parent I am worried that:

- 1** The school has not given parents any/sufficient information on this important topic, including how it is currently implementing Prevent, and whether any children have been wrongly referred under it. As this would require parental consent I am concerned that I am unfamiliar with the content and procedure of such a referral.
- 2** The effects of Prevent could possibly cause long-term damage to my child and scare them into not wanting to discuss or contribute to tasks freely (parents of the children mentioned above and others have already spoken of the psychological impact on their children).
- 3** Staff have not had alternative training which looks at some of the known problems of Prevent and the negative effects it can have.

I know that there are discussions happening around the country by those who object to Prevent. For such a sensitive topic it should be necessary to take into account other things which could affect the whole community instead of only relying on the official training given.

I hope my concerns will be taken on board, and steps taken to allay these fears. Doing so would instil a sense of confidence in the seriousness with which the school takes its responsibility to the students and our community.

I look forward to a written response in addressing my worries and replying to my questions and suggestions.

Yours sincerely,

Endnotes:

1) <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/four-year-old-raises-concerns-of-radicalisation-after-pronouncing-cucumber-as-cooker-bomb-a6927341.html>

2) https://www.buzzfeed.com/sirajdatoo/prevent-strategy-is-violating-childrens-human-rights-report?utm_term=.gbyd18y79p#.dpm7b4lyWr

3) <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11927303/Teachers-extremist-fears-over-boy-10-after-he-complains-about-lack-of-prayer-room.html>

4) <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/10/uk-keyword-warning-software-schools-raises-red-flag-151004081940435.html>

5) <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/sep/22/school-questioned-muslim-pupil-about-isis-after-discussion-on-eco-activism>

6) <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/may/28/fury-after-primary-pupils-are-asked-to-complete-radicalisation-seeking-surveys>

**Islamic
Human Rights
Commission**



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