

Radicalisation and preventing extremism

The following is taken directly from a Leeds 'One Minute Guide' (Number 102, August 2024).

What is radicalisation?

Radicalisation is a safeguarding issue and refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and other forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Whilst no single factor is usually enough to cause someone to join a terrorist organisation, several factors together can create the conditions under which terrorism can occur.

Who does it affect?

Those involved in extremist activity come from a range of backgrounds and experiences. There is no single profile of what an extremist looks like or what might drive a young person towards becoming radicalised. It can affect impressionable young people and adults. Radicalisation is a process and the process is different for everyone – it can take place over an extended period or within a very short time frame.

What factors might contribute towards radicalisation?

It's important to be able to recognise some of the factors that might contribute towards the radicalisation of an individual. Some of the causes that lead to an individual becoming radicalised are no different to other factors that can lead susceptible individuals towards concerning activity such as drug misuse, child sexual exploitation, gangs and alcohol abuse. Other factors might include:

- a need for belonging
- bereavement
- looking for a cause or reward
- mental health difficulties
- being withdrawn or isolated
- family or friends involved in extremism
- feelings of injustice and grievance
- a desire for power, respect or status
- bullying
- drug or alcohol misuse
- opportunistic involvement
- online radicalisation

What behaviours might be displayed by someone who is being radicalised?

Radicalisation may be identified by an individual exhibiting a change in behaviour or a number of changes in behaviours. These may include some of the following, but remember there may be other underlying issues for behaviour changes and this is not an exhaustive list:

- changes in mood or secretive behaviour
- possession of violent extremist literature or use of inappropriate language
- expression of extremist views or sympathy to their causes
- engagement in extremist ideologies
- isolating themselves from friends and family
- outbursts of anger
- change in language or use of words
- fixation on a new subject or person
- secretive online behaviour
- preaching or imposing their views on others

What can schools do?

All school staff follow the safeguarding procedures and policies if they have a concern about a young person.

Notice – Check – Share

If members of staff **notice** a change in an individual that could make them vulnerable to being exploited or radicalised, they should follow safeguarding procedures and report this via CPOMS (monitoring system used in school). The member of staff should then **check** their concern with a Designated Safeguarding Lead and if there is a genuine concern about radicalisation then the Designated Safeguarding Lead should **share** a Prevent referral.

Channel Programme

Channel is a voluntary programme designed to safeguard vulnerable individuals from being drawn into extremist or terrorist behaviour. Channel works in a similar way to existing multi-agency partnerships. It is chaired by the local authority and works with other agencies to collaboratively assess the risk to an individual, decide whether an intervention is necessary and work with partners to develop appropriate support for each referral.

Further information and support

Leeds City Council: [Leeds Prevent page](#)

Government: [guidance](#) and [help](#)