



St Mary's R.C. Primary School

Prevent Duty Policy

Created September 2013

Updated annually in September

Last Updated September 2026

Vision:

We believe that every child is a gift from God, therefore, we aim to provide an outstanding and happy Catholic education which develops the 'whole child' whilst enabling them to reach their full potential.

Mission statement:

We love God ... so we follow the examples of Jesus

We love learning ... so we always do our very best in everything

We love each other ... so we treat each other as we want to be treated

Policy owner	Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Approved by	Governing Body
Date updated	September 2026
Review cycle	At least annually and sooner where guidance, local risk or circumstances change
Read alongside	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Online Safety Policy; Behaviour Policy; Equality Policy; Staff Code of Conduct; Visiting Speakers procedures

Statement of intent

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation into terrorism is part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities. St Mary's will take a proportionate, child-centred approach: noticing concerns, checking them in context, sharing them through safeguarding procedures, and seeking appropriate advice or support. Prevent is an early-intervention safeguarding duty; it is not about criminalising children for holding views, nor about treating any faith, ethnicity, nationality or political viewpoint as inherently suspicious.

The school will have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, as required by section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This policy reflects the Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, current Channel guidance, and Rochdale Borough Council's local referral arrangements.

1. Definitions

Prevent: Part of the UK counter-terrorism strategy concerned with stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Radicalisation: The process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Terrorism: As defined in law, broadly involving the use or threat of serious violence, serious property damage or serious disruption to an electronic system, designed to influence government or intimidate the public for a political, religious, racial or ideological cause.

Extremism: For the purposes of current government guidance, the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that seeks to negate the rights and freedoms of others, undermine or replace liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights, or intentionally create a permissive environment for others to do so.

Channel: A voluntary, multi-agency safeguarding programme that assesses and supports people who are susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the Prevent duty is embedded within the school's wider safeguarding arrangements and that appropriate policies, risk assessment, training, curriculum provision, filtering and monitoring arrangements are in place.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the school's lead for concerns relating to radicalisation. The DSL will maintain an understanding of local and national risks, provide advice to staff, consider referrals, liaise with the local authority and other safeguarding partners, and ensure that relevant information is recorded and shared appropriately.

All staff must remain alert to safeguarding concerns, complete required safeguarding and Prevent training, follow the school's reporting procedures, and report concerns promptly to the DSL. Staff should not investigate suspected radicalisation themselves or attempt to determine a child's ideology.

3. Training and staff awareness

Prevent and radicalisation form part of the school's safeguarding training. Staff will receive appropriate training at induction and annually thereafter. Training will help staff understand that there is no single profile of a person susceptible to radicalisation and that concerns must be considered in context.

- the current Prevent duty and how it links to safeguarding;
- possible indicators of susceptibility and concerning behaviour, including online behaviour;
- how to respond to disclosures or concerning comments without confrontation;
- the school's internal reporting route and how Prevent referrals are considered;
- the role of Channel and the fact that Channel support is voluntary;
- online radicalisation, social media, gaming spaces, private messaging, recommendation algorithms, generative AI and synthetic/deepfake content.

4. Understanding risk and possible indicators

There is no checklist that can determine whether a child is being radicalised. A change in behaviour, appearance, friendship group, religious practice, political interest, nationality or family background must never, on its own, be treated as evidence of radicalisation. Staff should consider the child's age, development, SEND, circumstances, online experiences and the wider safeguarding picture.

Concerns may arise where a child, for example:

- repeatedly accesses, shares or seeks terrorist or extremist propaganda or material linked to terrorism;
- expresses support for terrorist violence, terrorist organisations or the use of violence to achieve ideological aims;
- is in contact with people who appear to be encouraging terrorism-related activity or is being groomed or coerced online;
- becomes unusually secretive about online activity alongside other concerning changes;
- uses dehumanising, hateful or strongly 'us versus them' narratives alongside support for violence;

- shows an escalating fixation with terrorist attacks, manifestos, propaganda or violent extremist material;
- attempts to recruit or influence others towards terrorism-related ideology or activity;
- shows other vulnerabilities which, when considered with terrorism-related concerns, suggest that they may be susceptible to radicalisation.

Staff should avoid assumptions and discriminatory profiling. Vulnerability factors such as isolation, bullying, trauma, family difficulty, unmet needs or a search for identity may be relevant to safeguarding, but they are not evidence of radicalisation by themselves.

5. Online radicalisation, AI and emerging technology

Online environments are a significant part of the contemporary radicalisation risk. Children may encounter harmful material through social media, video-sharing platforms, gaming and chat services, private or encrypted messaging, forums, livestreams and algorithmically recommended content.

Generative artificial intelligence can also create or amplify safeguarding risks. AI tools may generate convincing but false text, images, audio or video; imitate public figures; translate or repackage extremist narratives; or make harmful material appear authoritative. Deepfakes and synthetic media may be used to manipulate, provoke or mislead children. Staff will therefore teach pupils to question provenance, check sources, recognise manipulation and seek help when content is disturbing or encourages hatred or violence.

The school's filtering and monitoring arrangements will be reviewed at least annually and will take account of Prevent risks, including dynamic and AI-generated content. Filtering and monitoring are not a substitute for supervision, education, professional curiosity or safeguarding reporting.

6. Prevent risk assessment

The school will maintain proportionate Prevent risk assessment which reflects the age of pupils, the school context, local intelligence and online risks. Where a specific risk is identified, an action plan will set out how that risk will be mitigated. The assessment will be reviewed at least annually and when significant new risks emerge.

The assessment will consider, as appropriate:

- local and national threat information and advice from safeguarding partners;
- online access, filtering and monitoring arrangements;
- staff confidence, training and referral routes;
- curriculum opportunities to build resilience, critical thinking and media literacy;
- visiting speakers and use of school premises;
- pupil vulnerabilities and any relevant safeguarding trends, without discriminatory profiling.

7. Reporting concerns: Notice, Check, Share

Staff who are concerned that a child may be susceptible to radicalisation should follow the same principle as for other safeguarding concerns: notice what is concerning, check the context and relevant information without conducting an investigation, and share the concern promptly with the DSL who will record this on CPOMS.

Stage	School response
NOTICE	Record what was seen, heard or disclosed, using the child's own words where possible. Consider immediate safety.
CHECK	Share with the DSL. The DSL considers the wider safeguarding context, available information and whether advice from safeguarding partners is required.
SHARE	Where appropriate, the DSL makes or supports a Prevent referral and/or a referral to other safeguarding services. Information is shared lawfully, proportionately and on a need-to-know basis.

8. Referrals and Channel

A Prevent referral should be based on a genuine concern that a person may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. It should not be made simply because a child has expressed a controversial opinion, practises a particular religion, belongs to a particular community, or has a protected characteristic.

For Rochdale, public-sector professionals can use the local Prevent referral process. Current local contact details are: Channel Panel Programme, channel@rochdale.gov.uk, 0300 303 8878 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm). If a child is at immediate risk or there is an emergency, call 999. Where there is an immediate terrorism-related threat or urgent police concern, staff should follow emergency procedures and police advice.

Channel is a voluntary, multi-agency safeguarding process. If a referral is not appropriate for Channel, the child may be signposted to other safeguarding or support services. Where the concern relates to broader child protection needs, the school will also follow Rochdale Children's Social Care procedures.

Rochdale Children's Social Care: 0300 303 0440 during office hours; professionals should use the Children's Services Portal for child safeguarding referrals. The DSL will ensure that local contact details and referral routes are checked when this policy is reviewed.

9. Preventing radicalisation through learning

St Mary's builds pupils' resilience through its Catholic ethos, safeguarding curriculum and wider personal development provision. The school promotes the fundamental British values of democracy,

the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, alongside Gospel values of love, dignity, respect, compassion and service.

- age-appropriate opportunities to discuss difference, belonging, prejudice, respect and community;
- critical thinking, media literacy and checking the reliability of online information;
- understanding how algorithms, influencers and AI-generated material can shape what people see online;
- safe, balanced discussion of controversial issues, with due regard to the school's duty of political impartiality;
- online safety teaching through Computing and across the curriculum;
- opportunities for pupil voice, democratic participation, charitable action and service;
- clear teaching that disagreement never justifies hatred, harassment or violence.

10. Visiting speakers and use of school premises

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that visiting speakers are suitable and appropriately supervised. Relevant checks and due diligence will be proportionate to the event and risk. The school will not knowingly provide a platform for activity that encourages terrorism, supports a proscribed terrorist organisation, or undermines safeguarding.

11. Equality, inclusion and SEND

Prevent will be implemented in a way that respects equality, freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression within the law, and the dignity of every child. Staff must not stereotype or profile pupils on the basis of race, ethnicity, faith, nationality, immigration status, disability or political views.

Pupils with SEND or additional communication needs may require adapted teaching about online influence, manipulation, misinformation and help-seeking. Staff will consider how a pupil's needs may affect their understanding, communication or online vulnerability when assessing safeguarding concerns.

12. Record keeping, information sharing and confidentiality

Prevent concerns will be recorded in line with the school's safeguarding procedures, using CPOMS. Records should be factual, clear and distinguish observed behaviour, the child's words, professional judgement and actions taken. Information will be shared when necessary, proportionately and lawfully to safeguard children. Fear of breaching data protection law must not prevent appropriate safeguarding information sharing.

13. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher, DDSL and Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through safeguarding oversight, staff training, curriculum review, incident and referral information, filtering and

monitoring reviews, and the Prevent risk assessment. The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where national guidance, local referral arrangements or identified risks change.

Appendix A - Staff quick guide

If you notice...	Do...
A child makes a concerning comment about terrorism or violence	Stay calm; listen; do not interrogate; record the exact words; report to the DSL.
A child accesses or shares concerning extremist/terrorist material	Do not forward or unnecessarily copy it. Preserve relevant information safely and report immediately to the DSL.
A concern relates mainly to controversial or political views	Do not assume radicalisation. Consider context and safeguarding indicators; share with the DSL if there is a genuine concern.
There is an immediate danger or credible threat	Follow emergency procedures and contact police/999 as appropriate.
You are unsure	Speak to the DSL. Staff are not expected to make a terrorism-risk assessment alone.

Appendix B - Key 2026 references

- Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026).
- Home Office, Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales.
- Home Office, Key principles of Prevent (published February 2026).
- Home Office, Notice, Check, Share (published August 2026).
- Home Office, Channel duty guidance: protecting people susceptible to radicalisation (updated October 2025).
- Department for Education, Making a referral to Prevent.
- Rochdale Borough Council, Refer someone at risk of radicalisation.
- Rochdale Borough Council, Report a child at risk.

Policy reviewed: September 2026