

Best practice in responding to the Prevent Duty: St Paul's C of E Primary School

Area: **Blackburn**

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Brief description

This case study looks at how St Paul's C of E Primary School in Rawtenstall has implemented the new Prevent Duty in school. A positive approach to handling the sensitive issues of violent extremism and radicalisation underpin St Paul's pragmatic attitude to safeguarding their pupils.

Overview – the school's message



"St. Paul's Church of England Primary School is a very special place. We are a friendly, welcoming school with a strong ethos based around our role in the local and global communities. We aim to provide a strong foundation for every child's future, equipping them with the life skills needed for the 21st Century and a love of learning. We believe that school works best when there is a genuine, three way partnership between ourselves, parents and children, which places children at the centre of all we do. Our aim is to bring out the best in all our children."

Suzanne Howard, Headteacher

The good practice in detail

As one of the first primary schools in the UK to take steps to respond to the Prevent Duty, St Paul's have chosen to positively engage with a new and challenging aspect of safeguarding in schools. This positive approach is echoed by staff who state that they have confidence in both their organisation's policies and procedures for safeguarding against radicalisation, and in their own knowledge of how to respond to any concerns that they might have.

A learning environment that encourages open discussion and the promotion of values such as tolerance, freedom of expression and democracy, ensures that young learners are able to express themselves and to learn in a safe environment.

So how has St Paul's gone about responding to the new legislation?

Understanding the message of Prevent – seeing the wood for the trees

The first step was to arrange for school staff to undertake awareness training. Working with Victvs Ltd. the school arranged for all staff to complete basic, online Prevent Duty Awareness Training (PDAT). This short course gives learners the knowledge that they need in an easy to understand format. It is accredited by the CPD Certification service, Plain English Campaign and approved by the Home Office. Despite being a basic awareness course, participants are required to pass a test of 15 questions at the end of the course in order to receive a certificate of completion.

'Safeguarding in simple terms.'

Effective leadership – doing more than ticking a box

The leadership team at St Paul's have approached the new duty as much more than a tick box exercise. Having completed basic awareness training they then progressed onto an advanced Prevent Strategy Awareness Training (PSAT) course aimed at Senior Leaders and Designated Safeguarding Leads. The Senior Leadership Team are now in an excellent position to take the lead on the Prevent Duty across the school because they understand violent extremism and radicalisation at both practitioner and organisational levels. Headteacher Suzanne Howard was subsequently so confident in her understanding of her duties that she was prepared to be interviewed by Simon Israel and to appear on Channel 4 news.

Consolidating learning – ensuring that staff are properly trained

Once all staff had completed the online e-learning module a small group of staff undertook a further face-to-face consolidation session. This allowed practitioners to ask questions of a Prevent Duty specialist in a safe learning environment.

Impact on safeguarding

Staff in the school are now acutely aware of what is required of them under the Prevent Duty but perhaps more importantly they see how it fits within existing safeguarding frameworks. They know that the duty is not intended to create restrictions on their work, but rather extends their existing duties in order to protect vulnerable young people. They can recognise the signs of radicalisation and know the procedures for reporting any concerns they may have.

The school's background

ST. PAUL'S
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL



St Paul's is a slightly larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action is below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The school is also a 'Forest School'.

Are you thinking of putting similar ideas into practice in your school? Get in touch [here](#). To view our other good practice examples and resources, go to: www.victvs.co.uk