MLA
Prevent Policy

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Statement

Move Language Ahead (MLA) understands its responsibilities under the Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 to reduce the likelihood of people of all ages being radicalised or drawn into terrorism and seeks to meet its obligations in the ways shown below. Everyone- management, staff, sub-contractors and students- must be involved in this endeavour.

Context

MLA accepts students aged 11 and 17 on temporary junior summer courses. These courses tend to run during the summer months from June to August, and students usually stay for a period of two weeks. The majority of our students come from Italy.

All of our students live on campus in halls of residence- we do not use homestays.

Despite our students generally being from a similar background, we promote a multicultural environment, evidenced by our multi-ethnic staff, where respect for and tolerance of other beliefs is required.

Leadership

MLA understands its responsibilities under the Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 to reduce the likelihood of people of all ages being radicalised or drawn into terrorism and seeks to meet its obligations in the ways shown below and the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (DfE, The Prevent duty, Departmental advice from school and childcare providers, 2015).

Everyone- management, staff, sub-contractors and students- must be involved in this endeavour. Ways in which we do this is:

- Having a Prevent Lead who is trained to deal with any concerns.
- The Prevent Lead at MLA is the Academic Manager, Ruth Marin (r.marin@mlaworld.com) +44 7448 509226
- supported by the Head Office staff
- Training staff, both online and face-to-face on the key areas of prevent. This is aimed at raising awareness, what signs to look out for in students and staff, explaining terminology, identifying who to contact in the event of concern, and also what to do.
- Making sure sub-contractors are aware of Prevent and what is expected of them.
- Exemplifying core British values through documents given to students and in the MLA syllabus with lessons based on British culture and traditions. Our approach is to educate that this is how things are in UK, which may be different to the student's own country.
- Ensure delivery of an effective risk assessment / action plan and policy as outlined here.
- Due to the multi-centre nature of the organisation, each centre has a Welfare Manager who is responsible for day-to-day safeguarding issues, under the supervision of the Prevent Lead.

Understanding Terminology

It is vital that key terminology used in connection with Prevent are understood by all.

- Radicalisation: act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.
- Extremism: holding extreme political or religious views which may deny right to any group or individual.
- These views can be expressed in vocal or active opposition to. Extremism can refer to a range of views, e.g. racism, homophobia, extreme right-wing ideology, as well as any religious extremism.

- Core British values: including (i) democracy, (ii) the rule of law, (iii) individual liberty (iv) respectful tolerance of different faiths or beliefs.

MLA understand the importance of making this terminology known to all staff, students and sub-contractors. This will be achieved through training.

Understanding the risk of extremism

Staff, students & other adults (group leaders) may arrive at a centre already holding extremist views. Or, whilst part of the course, they may be influenced by a range of factors: global events, peer pressure, media, family views, extremist materials via hardcopy or online, inspirational speakers, friends or relatives being harmed, social networks. People who are vulnerable are more likely to be influenced. Their vulnerability could stem from a range of causes: loss of identity or sense of belonging, isolation, exclusion, mental health problems, sense of injustice, personal crisis, victim of hate crime or discrimination, bereavement.

Ways to counteract risks

We aim to counteract risks by doing the following:

- Promoting a safe and supportive international environment via clear expectations of accepted behaviours and those, including extremism, that will not be tolerated.
- Exemplifying core British values through documents given to students and the MLA syllabus, which includes a lesson British Values on arrival, as well as lessons on British culture and traditions. Our approach is to educate that this is how things are in UK, which may be different to the student's own country.
- Where possible, developing critical awareness and thought to counter accepting extremism without question, especially of online material.
- Challenging radical or extremist views in any context. In most situations this would require an immediate response, referring to international environment of school, and tolerance expected and then reporting concerns. In class, during activities or at any point during the course, all staff must be ready to verbally challenge statements that promote an extreme view.
- Being ready to react when world or local events cause upset and the likelihood of conflicting feelings being expressed. The Prevent lead and Welfare Manager will take the initiative in these situations.
- Having filters on IT equipment where possible and clear rules on accessing extremist / terrorist websites / uses of social networks to exchange extremist / terrorist views. These rules are stated in the Student handbook, Group Leader Manual and Staff Handbook.
- Ensuring that extremist speakers do not use premises to distribute material or expound views; have system for vetting any visiting speakers / presenters
- Staff endeavour to get to know students as well as possible during their short time with us. Through knowing students well, it is easier to spot changes in behaviour
- Staff must be observant and vigilant in noticing any signs of radical or extremist behaviour
- Welfare and all staff ensure support for any students identified as vulnerable

Training

MLA train all staff in order to provide more knowledge and confidence to all. All staff must complete a UK government Basic Awareness Course online prior to the commencement of their contract.
This policy is designed to make sure training given is relevant to our specific context.

Documents & training

This training ensures MLA staff understand the following:

- Understand context and expectations of Prevent
- Their duty to implement the policy
- Understand terminology and risks associated with radicalisation and extremism

- How to identify and support vulnerable students
- Ways the school will counteract the risks:
- Signs to notice what may cause concern
- Know the lead Prevent person and procedures for communicating concerns
- Know the importance of their own behaviour and professionalism in (a) being exemplars of British values
- and (b) not expounding their personal views to students on sensitive matters

Students and group leaders are also made aware of key parts of the policy:

- Understanding terminology
- Importance of maintaining a supportive and tolerant society within the school
- What core British values are and why they are considered important
- Any changes to school rules, particularly those regarding IT
- Report any concerns / incidents and and understand reporting procedures

Signs that may cause concern

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. It is vital that staff working with children and young people are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Factors that may contribute to vulnerability

- Rejected by peer, faith or social group/family or distanced from their cultural /religious heritage and experiences; a sense of isolation;
- Pressure from persons linked to extremism
- Victim or witness to race or religious hate crime
- Conflict with family over religious beliefs/lifestyle/politics
- Identity confusion; discomfort about their place in society; personal crisis; experiencing family tensions;
- Recent religious conversion; or they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Under-achievement; or low self-esteem;
- Experiencing high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity/personal crisis.
- Experience of poverty, disadvantage or social exclusion
- Extremist influences or being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends;
- Unmet aspirations e.g. the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
- Experiences of criminality e.g. involvement with criminal groups; imprisonment; and poor resettlement/ reintegration on release
- Special Educational Needs where pupils may experience difficulties with: social interaction; empathy with others; understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others
- A series of traumatic events global, national or personal e.g. migration; local community tensions; events affecting the pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- May possess literature related to extreme views or be accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element

Examples of behaviours attached to vulnerability

- Uncharacteristic or significant change of appearance; and / or behaviour due to new influences
- Angry
- New circle of friends
- Change in language
- Depressed
- Absence
- Asking inappropriate questions
- Scripted speech

- New found arrogance
- Tattoos
- Withdrawn
- Short tempered
- Fixated on a subject
- Closed to new ideas or conversation
- Change of routine
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- Saying inappropriate things/ a call to violent action; justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues; or
- using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage

Since all of our students are under 18, these are all safeguarding issues and will be dealt with by Safeguarding Staff.

How and when to react to concerns

If anyone has any concerns, the first person who should be contacted is the centre's Welfare Manager. The Prevent Lead Ruth Marin can also be contacted if the concern is serious. Confidentiality is assured for the person reporting a concern.

Concerns must be recorded in the centre office Record File. Please ensure the report is as detailed as possible and given to the Prevent Lead.
It is important that any and all concerns or incident, however small are reported. All reports will be dealt with sensitively and carefully.

Immediate threat

If you have seen a person acting suspiciously or if you see a vehicle, unattended package or bag which might be an immediate threat, move away and call 999 without delay.

Notice

Those who work in frontline support roles will often be the first to notice if someone displays concerning behaviour, like the signs of radicalisation outlined in this policy. If staff notice behaviours that cause you concern, then they may want to consider whether the person is susceptible to radicalisation.
There could be many different reasons for these behaviours, not just radicalisation. It's important to understand the context, and why these changes are happening, before jumping to any conclusions.

Check

Staff may wish to discuss their concern organisationally, with the person responsible for safeguarding, such as the Welfare manager or Centre Director. Checking before sharing a concern is a way of making sure you have gathered as much relevant information as possible before making your referral.

Share

Once you have gathered the relevant information, the Centre Director will inform the Prevent Lead. The Prevent Lead and MLA Managing Director will decide whether to share the concern and make a referral to the police using the Prevent national referral form (NRF). In some cases, staff may do this directly.

The Channel Programme

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make Prevent referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. In addition to information sharing, if a staff member makes a Prevent referral, it will be considered to see if it meets the criteria for a Channel panel, and staff may be asked to attend the panel (chaired by the local authority) to discuss the individual referred to determine whether support is required.

An e-learning channel awareness programme for staff is available at: Channel General Awareness. Schools and colleges that are required to have regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' are listed in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 as partners required to co-operate with local Channel panels.

Risk Assessment of current situation and Action Plan for future

A risk assessment / action plan has been produced showing what is already being done and what still needs to be done; it will be reviewed and updated at least annually by the Prevent Lead. In addition to annual reviews, MLA commits to updating this policy promptly in response to any changes in Prevent duty guidelines, legislation, or emerging risks, ensuring our policy remains aligned with best practices. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings.

Working with local partners

MLA will try to make and maintain contact with the local police/local authority Prevent coordinator to understand their role and the support available, for example via the Channel process.

The Prevent lead will make contact with local authority to ascertain other useful local agencies.-

Develop local area Prevent links with other similar organisations.
Share information with all local organisations as appropriate.

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