



University of  
Chester

**Teaching Controversial  
Issues to support the  
DfCSF toolkit on Prevent.**



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# Foreword

## Introduction by Greater Manchester Police

Greater Manchester Police have been working with schools, colleges and universities for many years and so when I was asked to look at how we could support the DfCSF to raise the profile of their toolkit on Preventing Violent Extremism in schools, I went and talked to as many teachers as I could. What they told me was that for many of them the subjects raised by the Government's strategy, for reducing the likelihood of one of our young people becoming radicalised into violent extremism, were too controversial to be tackled without additional help and support.

They also told me that there were few, if any, good quality resources to help them work across the curriculum, either to plan lessons or to support teaching and learning in the classroom.

To try and help we commissioned Manchester Metropolitan University to write some lesson plans, and provide the necessary resources to support those plans, which would address the issues raised in the DfCSF toolkit. In addition we asked that these resources help schools demonstrate success against the Ofsted inspection framework under leadership, safeguarding and contributing to community cohesion. Some of these resources are discussed in this training manual and the full set are freely available to you and your school. They can be downloaded from the website [www.preventforschools.org](http://www.preventforschools.org) where you will also find other resources and links that may be of use.

We also asked the University of Chester to help us develop training for teachers that could be delivered in schools, by experienced teachers and university lecturers. This manual is a part of that training and is designed to help you implement the aims of the DfCSF toolkit on Prevent, safeguard our young people and reduce the likelihood of them becoming radicalised into violent extremism whether it is from an ideological perspective of extreme nationalism, animal rights activism or ecological action through to that which comes from a particular understanding of a faith tradition.

The University of Chester is also offering Masters degree level courses on teaching controversial issues and the PVE agenda, further details are available from the Faculty of Education and Children's Services, University of Chester.

If you would like any more help, or would like to offer some feedback, please do not hesitate to contact me personally.



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# Introduction

There are currently a number of issues that relate to religion, politics, values and beliefs that give rise to considerable concern. Societies around the world are experiencing violence or the threat of violence, social and political unrest, the resorting to violence by certain groups on the grounds of fighting for a cause. These include animal rights protests, G20 protests, dissident groups opposing the Northern Ireland peace process, extremist racist groups and others.

Violent extremism is not new. Throughout history there have been groups prepared to use violence to achieve their aims. Today, however, we face a new sort of threat where a small minority seeks to recruit young people with an ideology which justifies the use of violence sometimes through a distorted interpretation of a peaceful religion. Further, whilst violent extremism influenced by Al Qaida poses the greatest threat from international terrorism, there are other forms of extremism and prejudice which affect individuals and communities across the UK which could potentially lead to violence.

There is evidence that free-floating, independently funded terrorist networks are appearing in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. These networks tend to express only vague political goals – often little more than a deep hatred of current institutions. Those who support, foment, plan and enact terrorist attacks may be religious fanatics, or simply opponents of the government, who might come from inside, as well as outside the United Kingdom. Such groups can also be a magnet for violent individuals who have been alienated by our society's rapid social and economic changes.

Education can be a powerful weapon against an extremism which attempts to accentuate divisions and differences between individuals and communities, and exploits fears based on ignorance or prejudice. Schools can enable young people to develop the skills to think for themselves, provide the opportunity to learn about different cultures and faiths and, most importantly, to gain an understanding of the values we share.

Schools can provide a safe environment for discussing controversial issues and help young people understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making processes.

Although it is very rare for school age children to become involved in extremist activity to the point of committing criminal acts, young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age. As with other forms of criminality or risk of harm, early intervention is always preferable. Schools, working with other local partners, families and communities, can help support pupils who may be vulnerable as part of wider safeguarding responsibilities.

With this background in mind, school-based training programmes are being offered to teachers in the North West of England, to help them develop the confidence to address the issues raised and provide practical tools to use in their schools. Design and delivery of this training is a partnership between

Greater Manchester Police, the University of Chester, Manchester Metropolitan University and colleagues from the Manchester local authorities. The focus of this work is to support secondary schools in the region.

The University of Chester offers a module 'Teaching/Dealing with Controversial Issues and the Preventing Violent Extremism agenda' which is designed for teachers, managers and support staff who contribute to the education of children in their schools.

It can be accessed by all members of staff; the level of entry is decided by an individual's previous academic experience.

This Handbook is designed to provide background information and developmental activities which highlight the key issues underlying violent extremism in our society, why certain young people are attracted to extremist organisations and how schools can work with young people to provide them with the means by which healthy personal, family and community outcomes can be achieved.

In the next section, a broad picture is painted of the current situation in the UK relating

to violent extremism in our society, the perceived dangers and the issues that need to be addressed.

This is followed by a review of the factors that can lead to certain young people being attracted to violent extremism; this includes the reasons and processes involved (the why and how).

The role that the school can play in combating violent extremism is then considered – how a whole school curriculum approach can be adopted in such a way that links with the local community can be strengthened in active and positive ways. Ways of addressing emotive and controversial issues are explored along with the role of Learner Action Teams.

At various points in the Handbook, there are activities and exercises which are designed to enable reflection on important issues.

The Handbook concludes with a list of resources which schools will find informative and supportive of initiatives they wish to undertake.



# Aims of the Handbook

- ✓ To provide up-to-date background information about Prevent agenda
- ✓ To review the DfCSF toolkit on Prevent 'Learning together to be safe'
- ✓ To introduce a number of exercises for inclusion in the workshop
- ✓ To outline other self-development activities to be used after the workshop
- ✓ To inspire individual and group action planning

## Objectives:

- ✓ To explore controversial issues / difficult conversations
- ✓ To give teachers the confidence to implement 'Learning together to be safe'
- ✓ To enable an understanding of the background to violent extremism
- ✓ To explore how and why young people may be attracted to VE
- ✓ To identify how to manage difficult topics
- ✓ To create a critical thinking environment
- ✓ To suggest it's not just about listening and discussing
- ✓ To promote the role of Learning Action Teams
- ✓ To suggest strategies to address VE in schools

# Definitions/Terminology

## Activism

**A policy of taking direct and militant action to achieve a political or social goal**

Activism, in a general sense, can be described as intentional action to bring about social, political, economic, or environmental change.

This action is in support of, or opposition to, one side of an often controversial argument.

The word “activism” is often used synonymously with protest or dissent, but activism can stem from any number of political orientations and take a wide range of forms - from writing letters to newspapers or politicians, political campaigning, economic activism such as boycotts, rallies, street marches, strikes, work stoppages and hunger strikes

*[Adapted from Wikipedia]*

*In the light of the above examples, are you an activist in some elements of your life? If so, what form does your activist activity take? And are there times when you have considered taking more extreme action?*

## Extremism

**Extremism is a term used to describe the actions or ideologies of individuals or groups outside the perceived political centre of a society who are claimed to violate common moral standards. In democratic societies, individuals or groups that advocate the replacement of democracy with an authoritarian regime are usually branded extremists.**

The term is invariably, or almost invariably, used in a negative sense. Extremism is usually contrasted with moderation, and extremists with moderates. For example, in contemporary discussions in Western countries of Islam, or of Islamic political movements, it is common for there to be a heavy stress on the distinction between extremist and moderate Muslims. Extremism is not the same as terrorism.

*Can you give any other examples of non-violent extremism in UK?*



## Radicalism and Radicalisation

The term radical originally meant to go to the root of a (social) problem. The term radical is one not normally regarded as negative and, unlike extremist, is sometimes used by groups in their description of themselves. Radicalism may or may not have political ends. Virtually all social movements contain some elements of radicalism without developing into extremist violence.

Radicalisation is the process in which an individual changes from passiveness or activism to become more revolutionary, militant or extremist. Radicalisation frequently is driven by personal concerns at the local level in addition to frustration with international events.

An indicator of radicalisation is when learners become intolerant of other people's views or when they apply explicit moral knowledge about good and evil and behave in a way that is based on a good-evil hierarchy rather than considering the situationally appropriate response. Radicalization is often associated with youth, adversity, alienation, social exclusion, poverty, or the perception of injustice to self or others. However, many terrorists come from middle-class backgrounds and have university-level educations, particularly in the technical sciences and engineering.

Learning Together To Be Safe requires schools to recognise radicalisation before it becomes politically motivated extremism. According to the New York Police Department, Islamic radicalisation has several steps:

Pre-radicalisation	ordinary life prior to radicalisation
Self-identification	the individual comes to identify with radical movements
Indoctrination	they intensify and focus their beliefs
Jihadisation	they start to take actions based on their beliefs

*What local concerns could be used to radicalise youth in your community?*

## Resilience: Personal and Communal

Resilience is the positive capacity of people to cope with stress and catastrophe, to anticipate risk, limit the impact of negative experiences, and bounce back rapidly through surviving, adapting and growing in response to a period of disruptive change.

## Violent Extremism

**The Crown Prosecution Service defines violent extremism as:**

The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour using any means or medium to express views which:

- Foment, justify or glorify violence in furtherance of particular beliefs
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts
- Foment other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts, or
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK

Why do young people move from taking a radical, critical view of an issue that is important to them to adopting a violent, extremist form of behaviour?

- Radicalisation arises from a search for perfection, purity and idealism
- Comfort is gained from adopting an absolutist approach
- There can be a sense of feeling special through having a (global) mission



# Background to the preventing of violent extremism agenda

**There are currently a number of issues that relate to religion, politics, values and beliefs that give rise to considerable concern. Societies around the world are experiencing violence or the threat of violence, social and political unrest, the resorting to violence by certain groups on the grounds of fighting for a cause. These include animal rights protests, G20 protests, and dissident groups opposing the Northern Ireland peace process, extremist racist groups among others.**

Violent extremism is not new. Throughout history there have been groups prepared to use violence to achieve their aims. Today, however, we face a new sort of threat where a small minority seeks to recruit young people with an ideology which justifies the use of violence sometimes through a distorted interpretation of a peaceful religion.

While violent extremism influenced by Al Qaida poses the greatest threat to our society, there are other forms of extremism and prejudice which can affect individuals and communities across the country and can potentially lead to violence.

There is evidence that free-floating, independently funded terrorist networks are appearing in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. These networks tend to express only vague political goals – often little more than a deep hatred of current institutions. Those who support, foment, plan and enact terrorist attacks may be religious fanatics, or simply opponents of the government, who might come from inside, as well as outside

the United Kingdom. Such groups can also be a magnet for violent individuals who have been alienated by our society's rapid social and economic changes.

Education can be a powerful weapon against an extremism which attempts to accentuate divisions and differences between individuals and communities, and exploits fears based on ignorance or prejudice.

Schools can enable young people to develop the skills to think for themselves, provide the opportunity to learn about different cultures and faiths and, most importantly, to gain an understanding of the values we share.

Schools can provide a safe environment for discussing controversial issues and help young people understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making processes.

Although it is very rare for school age children to become involved in extremist activity to the point of committing criminal acts, young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age. As with other forms of criminality or risk of harm, early intervention is always preferable. Schools, working with other local partners, families and communities, can help support pupils who may be vulnerable as part of wider safeguarding responsibilities.

To assist schools in safeguarding young people, and to develop their contribution to promoting community cohesion, work based training is now being offered to all secondary schools in the Association of Greater Manchester Authority local authority areas. This training is offered by a well established partnership between Greater Manchester Police, the University of Chester, Manchester Metropolitan University and local authority colleagues.

The University of Chester offers a module 'Teaching/Dealing with Controversial Issues and the Preventing Violent Extremism agenda' which is designed for teachers,



managers and support staff who contribute to the education of children in their schools. It can be accessed by all members of staff; the level of entry is decided by an individual's previous academic experience.

This Handbook is designed to provide background information and developmental activities which highlight the key issues underlying violent extremism in our society, why certain young people are attracted to extremist organisations and how schools can work with young people to provide them with the means by which healthy personal, family and community outcomes can be achieved.

In the next section, a broad picture is painted of the current situation in the UK relating to violent extremism in our society, the perceived dangers and the issues that need to be addressed.

This is followed by a review of the factors that can lead to certain young people being attracted to violent extremism; this includes the reasons and processes involved (the why and how). The role that the school can play in combating violent extremism is then considered – how a whole school curriculum approach can be adopted in such a way that the links with the local community can be strengthened in active and positive ways. Ways of addressing emotive and controversial issues are outlined.

At various points in the Handbook, there are activities and exercises which are designed to provide new perspectives on the issues being discussed.

The Handbook concludes with a list of resources which schools will find informative and supportive of initiatives they wish to undertake.

## Background: the current situation

**Over the past 20 years a number of initiatives have been undertaken and reports written which are central to the role of education in the Prevention of violent extremism.**

A very important foundation in this area is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights. Nations that ratify this international convention are bound to it by international law. It came into force in the UK on 15 January 1992. When a country ratifies the Convention it agrees to do everything it can to implement it. The Convention gives children and young people over 40 substantive rights.

These include the right to:

- special protection measures and assistance
- access to services such as education and health care
- develop their personalities, abilities to the fullest potential
- grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding
- be informed about and participate

in achieving their rights in an accessible and active manner.

All of the rights in the Convention apply to all children and young people without discrimination.

The UNCRC provides a clear link between the enhancement of rights-respecting schools and the need for children's rights to be realised everywhere.

UNICEF UK is pioneering an initiative in UK schools called the Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA).

This initiative helps schools to use the UNCRC to define a clear set of values – not just rules - that has been developed with the full involvement of the school community and is actively upheld by pupils.

The award scheme started in 2004 and is running in more than 1000 primary and secondary schools in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The RRSA provides a coherent values framework which enhances school leadership. It shapes the ethos of the school and unifies a range of educational initiatives and government priorities:

- the global dimension
- SEAL (social and emotional aspects of learning)
- sustainable development
- community cohesion



## What are the benefits of engaging in the RRSA initiative?

Evidence gathered from schools participating in the RRSA suggests that when the values of the UNCRC underpin the ethos and curriculum of a school, they have a significant, positive impact on important aspects of child well-being and school improvement. They also have a positive effect on the relationships, teaching approaches, attitudes and behaviour of everyone involved.

To view the resources needed to prepare and enter for the award, see [www.unicef.org.uk/teacher\\_support/rrs\\_award.asp](http://www.unicef.org.uk/teacher_support/rrs_award.asp)

Another important initiative that related closely to the personal safety of children

came with the publication of *Every Child Matters* (ECM) (DCSF 2004) which identified the five outcomes that are most important to children and young people:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being

These five outcomes are universal ambitions for every child and young person, whatever their background or circumstances.

### Teachers, children and parents have reported:

- Improved pupil self-esteem
- Pupils' enhanced moral development
- Improved behaviour and relationships (reductions in bullying, exclusions and improved attendance)
- More positive attitudes towards diversity in society and the reduction of prejudice



## Learning together to be safe

In June 2008, the Government published guidance to local partners on Preventing violent extremism that emphasised the importance of working with children and young people and encouraged local partnerships to engage with schools and colleges.

The Learning Together To Be Safe toolkit supplements that guidance, responding to calls for more practical advice specifically focused on the education context. It is the product of discussions with young people, teachers, local authorities, police and community representatives across the country.

The toolkit seeks to:

- raise awareness amongst schools of threat from violent extremist groups and the risks for young people
- provide information about what can cause violent extremism, about preventative actions taking place locally and nationally and about where schools can get additional information and advice
- help schools understand the positive contribution they can make to empowering young people to create communities that are more resilient to extremism, and protecting the wellbeing of particular pupils or groups who may be vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremist activity
- provide advice on managing risks and responding to incidents locally, nationally or internationally that might have an impact on the school community

The purpose throughout is to support the confidence and capacity of staff and to encourage local partnership working.

## Prevent

The Government has developed a comprehensive counter terrorist strategy known as CONTEST, a revised version of which was published in March 2009. One of the four main CONTEST elements is Prevent, the aim of which is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism.

Prevent builds on and is linked to the Government's wider work to create strong, cohesive and empowered communities, based on a commitment to our common and shared values.

The Prevent strategy is based around five objectives. It is delivered through wide-ranging local partnerships and is informed by an understanding of the local context.

Local Prevent partnerships make connections between Prevent and other associated and related agendas. Local partners can give Prevent work different titles but, irrespective of the way Prevent is presented, it is vital to retain a focus on the Prevent objectives.

## The five Prevent objectives are:

- Challenge the ideology behind violent extremism and support mainstream voices
- Disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the places where they operate
- Support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists  
(This is mirrored in the OFSTED inspection framework: 'Schools are required to be inspected at prescribed intervals and inspectors must report on the contribution made by the school to community cohesion')
- Address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting  
(Adapted from Learning Together To Be Safe)
- Increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism





# Understanding the issues arising from the threats of violent Extremism

## National threats

The Government assesses that the UK is a high priority target for international terrorists aligned with Al Qaida and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. In practice this means a threat from British nationals and UK-based terrorists as well as from foreign terrorists planning attacks from abroad.

The majority of violent extremist networks are located in major urban conurbations such as London, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands.

Experience suggests there is no typical profile of UK-based violent extremists influenced by Al Qaida. They can come from a range of geographical areas, from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and include a number of converts to Islam. The nature of support for violent extremist activity varies but can include recruiting others, training, fundraising and procurement of support for terrorist activities. Training can include outward-bound type courses to encourage bonding either in the UK or in camps operated by Al Qaida overseas.

In addition to the severe threat posed by Al Qaida-influenced groups, dissident Irish republican terrorist groups who oppose the Northern Ireland peace process still pose a threat to British interests. Other UK-based extremist groups including racist and fascist organisations also pose a threat to public order and the British multicultural way of life. These groups often aspire to campaigns of violence against individuals, families and particular communities and, if unchecked, may provide a catalyst for alienation and disaffection within particular ethnic communities. Evidence suggests that the route to violent far-right extremism often begins with organisations seeking to recruit young people and even arranging specific training activities that include encouraging the use of guns and knives.

## The local picture

The challenge from violent extremism and activities of different groups will vary across the country and so it is important that schools understand and keep up to date with specific local issues affecting their communities. Safer School Partnerships can assist in this, as well as offering practical help and links to wider local partnerships.

Schools can also help local authorities and police understand tensions affecting their pupils. Schools will observe or hear how communities are feeling, may witness an event that has

happened, or be aware that something might happen. In all these three types of situation information from schools is important to help the local authority or police gain a whole community view and so protect young people from harm or causing harm.

Schools, and in particular teachers, are not being asked to 'spy' on their pupils or families. What is encouraged is that as an extension to existing safeguarding processes for vulnerable young are developed and then maintained. people, mechanisms and forums for sharing information relating to threats or community tensions

The Prevent guidelines encourage local areas to have a Preventing Violent Extremism action plan with activities across all five strands of the Prevent strategy. These will involve a range of partners led by the local authority, the police and other statutory and voluntary agencies and include the active involvement of local communities. The range of activities will vary depending on the scale of the challenges in the local area.

All local authorities are monitored against a 'National Indicator' measure of their activity to 'build resilience to violent extremism', including the extent of their partnership working.

Some local authorities have included this as one of their priority indicators in their Local Area Agreements.

Schools should be included in local partnership working on the Prevention of violent extremism and on promoting community cohesion.

Local authorities, the police and other partners can also be a source of support and advice for schools on issues concerning extremism and engagement with local community organisations.

(Adapted from Learning Together To Be Safe).



# Human beings and human social dynamics: basic principles

There are a number of factors that help us to understand the different ways in which human beings are impacted by interactions with other human beings.

*Along with each principle there is a question or questions that will help you to explore ways in which you behave in the world in relation to others.*

## PRINCIPLE 1

We are social animals. We continually confirm our identity through interacting with other people. When we are exposed to social pressure (for example, fear of rejection and exclusion, desire for acceptance) we may behave in ways that go against our personal values and beliefs.

*When was the last time that you acted against your values?  
Say why this was so.  
Was the pressure on you external or internal?*

## PRINCIPLE 2

Social interaction can reduce or remove individual inhibitions.

*Give an example where this can be positive; then give an example where the outcome can be negative*

## PRINCIPLE 3

Dominance and subordination are important elements in our relationships with others. Leaders can dominate through fear, strength, intellect, personal magnetism, and other means.

*Give an example of a leader (national or closer to home) who rules through fear; of one who leads through strengths; through intellect; through personal magnetism*

## PRINCIPLE 4

We can be inclusive and exclusive. We recognize same and other. Same can be same family, clan, neighbourhood, nationality, religion, etc. Other becomes anyone who is not same. What is same and other can shift rapidly.

*In your school, who do you consider to be the same as you and who would be different (this can be a colleague or a student)?  
Give 3 reasons for making this distinction.  
Now find 3 things that you share in common.*

## PRINCIPLE 5

Our language works at both a social and a thinking/emotional level. It creates relationships with others and influences our emotions, thoughts, and actions. Language is used to create “same” and “other.”

*Give 3 examples of ways in which you use language to create same and other – for example in how teachers use language when speaking to pupils to differentiate themselves, or ways in which pupils differentiate themselves from adults.*

## PRINCIPLE 6

We create the ways we see the world – both individually and collectively – using language. We connect facts with assumptions and construct stories about the way things are, including explanations about why things happen. When this process occurs with other people over time, patterns of belief emerge. Patterned behaviour is a part of culture and society. These patterns become reinforced socially through myth and ritual (which can occur in non-religious as well as religious contexts). We use myths and rituals to motivate and justify our behaviour.

*Choose some aspect of your life which is important to you, then identify someone or some group that holds a different or even diametrically opposed view.  
List 5 words that support your view and list 5 words that express your view of the other view.*

## PRINCIPLE 7

Physical proximity is an important part of how we relate to our environment and to each other. Without physical closeness we do not fully understand others intellectually or emotionally. We have various relationships that form networks which cut across formal institutions. These relationships and networks are greatly facilitated by communications technology - for example, through internet social networking.

*Do you use electronic social networking?*

*Do you use Facebook and/or Twitter?*

*Do you write or follow blogs?*

*What motivates you to interact with other people in this way?*

*What do you get from this?*

## PRINCIPLE 8

We cannot easily survive without the help of others. We take care to appear worthy of support. Thus our presentation of self and our credibility is related directly to our survival.

*Think of one way you have benefited from the help of someone else or others in the past week. What were the reasons for the other person(s) being willing to help you?*

*What is it about you that motivated the other person to be willing to help you?*

*In what ways do you consciously present yourself in such a way that others will respond to you in the ways that are beneficial to you?*





# How young people may be attracted to violent extremism

**Extremists use persuasive narratives to attract people to their cause based on a particular interpretation or distortion of history, politics or religion. Education can play a powerful role in encouraging young people to challenge ideas, think for themselves and take responsibility for their actions.**

We have a growing body of knowledge about the path followed by those who have become involved with Al Qaida-associated violent extremism from research and from case histories of those who have attempted or carried out terrorist acts.

Evidence suggests that this path, or radicalisation process, is not linear or predictable. The length of time taken can differ greatly from a few weeks to years and proceeding down a radicalisation path does not always result in violence.

For some, but not all, of those who have become involved in violent extremism, the transition to post secondary school learning was a crucial time. However the secondary school age period was often when the process of radicalisation started which eventually tipped them into choosing to undertake violent or criminal acts.



## Various factors are involved:

### Contact with recruiters

Although there are isolated incidents of 'self-radicalisers', young people will generally become involved in violent extremist movements under the influence of others. Initial contact could be via peers, older siblings, other family members or acquaintances. The process of radicalisation can often be a social one.

Interaction is most likely to be outside school settings, often in unsupervised environments such as gyms or cafés, or in private homes.

### Access to violent extremist materials

Access in the past has often been via leafleting and local contacts but evidence suggests that the internet is now playing a much more important role – both violent extremist videos and propaganda accessed via websites or contact via social networking sites.



### Use of extremist narratives

Violent extremists of all persuasions usually attract people to their cause through persuasive stories to:

- explain why I/my family/my community am/are experiencing disadvantage/ suffering/lack of respect, e.g. perceived persecution, inequality, oppression by a governing class, national or international politics
- explain why the conventional family/ school/community solutions do not provide answers to the core grievances e.g. 'the law does not protect us, my family is isolated from 'real life' and does not know what it is like for young people'
- justify violent or criminal remedies – either in local, or national settings e.g. 'we need to force a change of views, the only way to achieve change is through action' or 'we need to avenge a wrong we have suffered'
- claim a political, ideological or theological basis, however distorted, which is part of a wider global movement.

(Adapted from Learning Together To Be Safe)

# The language & dynamics of violence escalation

Fear can make people susceptible to simplistic interpretations and actions proposed by formal or informal leaders who promise quick, easy solutions to frustrating and complex issues.

Scapegoating is one example of a simplistic problem definition and solution - blaming a variety of problems on a particular group of people. The solution can become violence against those people.

Language can be a precursor to action. It is instrumental in the escalation process.

Observers of genocide in Bosnia and Rwanda quoted people as saying, "First we talked about killing people and then we killed people." Speaking the unspeakable can be a step towards violence and death.

Leaders/recruiters of violent extremist groups often use language in particular ways to define a problem and how it can be solved.

**These include:**

**Name Calling/Caricatures** - the use of loaded and unflattering terms to describe a particular person or group of people.

*Give an example from your own experience of life or from what you have read about in the press?*

**Card Stacking** - presenting only one side of the argument or only information to justify one's own position and/or action.

*Can you think of an example of this?*

**Testimonials** - using a famous and admired person to endorse a violent idea, cause, etc.

**Flag waving** - using the emotional appeal of patriotism to support a position or action.

**Band Wagon** - everyone else is doing it, why not you?

*What current bandwagon(s) are you on?*

**Extreme examples** - Used to prove a point, to slant an argument, to support a prejudice.

*Can you give an example from the field of politics?*

**Slogans** - designed to damage credibility, encourage hostility, create a false impression.

*List some of the caricatures that exist in the UK of certain national groups – e.g. Americans, the French, Italians.....*

**Polarized thinking** - to encourage distrust and suspicion. Limited and false choices are presented: us/them, strong/weak, rich/poor, good/bad

*Can you give an example of this from anywhere in the world? Group think - where a leader suppresses any information that is contrary to the stories, myths, and information that he is putting forward.*

**Group think** - where a leader suppresses any information that is contrary to the stories, myths, and information that he is putting forward.

*In which media do you find this 'either/or' dual view?*



# The language & dynamics of violence escalation

**At the heart of violence is the inability to confront differences constructively. This occurs both at a societal and a personal level. There are many types of differences: values, personality, wealth, religion, ethnicity, and so on. There are three parts to accommodating differences:**

- 1. acknowledging differences without judging**
- 2. constructively confronting differences**
- 3. learning to live with differences that won't go away**

In Western culture, we often have two extreme reactions to conflict: we deny its existence or we react aggressively. When we deny or suppress conflict, the result is often gossip, innuendo, and/or passive aggressive behaviour. When we react aggressively it is often with verbal or physical violence.

Underlying our traditional approach to differences is a belief that in order to get along we have to reach complete agreement, like, and possibly love each other. We need a middle ground where civility and respect are exercised. This does not imply agreement or personal affection. There is a continuum involving self and other that includes:

- acknowledging the presence of the other
- recognition of the humanity of the other
- respecting the other

**We need to:**

- 1. Provide opportunities** for various groups of people to be together. Humans respond emotionally to touch and proximity. Anthropologists say that people who eat and work together, don't make war with each other. "People's faces, as Thomas Homer-Dixon notes, "are critical connection points among us in our increasingly fluid, atomized, and dehumanized world." They "can help us translate crowds into community, and selfishness and self-centredness into empathy and generosity." (Homer-Dixon 2001)
- 2. Change the language** we use when speaking about each other. Make language more inclusive, break down "we" and "they" to "us". We need to emphasize common experiences, hopes, emotions, and humanity and develop stories and rituals that positively reinforce inclusiveness.
- 3. Prevent discrimination** based on various attributes – linguistic, social, physical, religious, political, etc. Emphasize respect and dignity for all of us. Uncouple different and bad. Provide opportunities for equal status contact.
- 4. Provide multiple perspectives** of people and events. Provide free and open forums for the discussion and dissemination of information on any given topic.

**5. Teach critical thinking** - how to distinguish data from assumptions, facts from propaganda. Teach problem solving skills – how to approach complex issues and a process for resolving them. What are the key elements of critical thinking skills?

**7. Agree on “ground rules”** – how we will listen, talk, and behave toward each other; how to be respectful and civil to one another. If you were to engage a group of people in discussing an emotive issue, what ‘ground rules’ would enable an honest, respectful and safe forum for discussion?

There is tremendous positive energy as well as negative energy in all of us. Positive energy is released when we recognise other humans in need and respond with our emotions and our assistance. We relate to individual faces, not to the collective mass of people. We need to recognize this, re-direct our energy toward positive ends, and exercise our own personal responsibility in our democracy.



# Countering violent extremism in the school

The following ideas have been adapted from the Teaching Pack Learning Together to be Safe, which has been written by the Centre for Urban Education, Institute of Education, Manchester Metropolitan University (CUE 2009)

Schools can give learners the opportunity to learn about different cultures and faiths and to debate shared values, so as to enable them to become involved in decision-making about important and real issues. It is real people, concerned with real tasks in real places that can make a difference.

## **The task facing schools is to:**

- Raise awareness
- Provide information
- Enable learners to make a positive contribution
- Protect the wellbeing of learners
- Help manage risks

## **In order to do this, there are at least 5 elements to a whole school approach:**

- Understanding how to challenge the extremism narratives that can lead to harm
- Understanding how to Prevent harm
- Understanding how to support vulnerable individuals
- Increasing the resilience of the learners and their communities
- Allowing grievances to be aired

## **A whole school approach would involve focusing on:**

- the leadership, values and ethos of the school
- learning, teaching and the curriculum
- learner support processes
- the management of risks and responding to events
- the relationship between the school and its community
- the evaluation of the progress being made

It is important to see the connections between the learning, teaching and curriculum elements and the other dimensions of a whole school approach.

## Learning, teaching and the curriculum

In approaching the issues outlined above, some thought must be given to teacher style. A curriculum and pedagogy to support learners in achieving the goals outlined above require

- promoting knowledge, skills and understanding to build the resilience of learners
- exploring controversial issues
- recognising local needs
- challenging extremism narratives
- promoting universal rights
- promoting critical analysis
- promoting pro-social values

Focusing on the curriculum requires schools to address the causes of violent extremism. Broadly speaking, this involves 3 main elements:

1. Understanding the potential impacts of contacts with recruiters,
2. Understanding the potential impacts of access to violent extremism materials,
3. Developing the skills to challenge the use of extremism narratives.

(Adapted from CUE 2009)



# Teaching emotive and controversial issues and managing difficult conversations

**Controversial issues ‘that are likely to be sensitive or controversial are those that have a political, social or personal impact and arouse feeling and/or deal with questions of value or belief.’**

(Oxfam 2006).

Controversial issues can be local or global. Race, gender, religion, politics, personal lifestyle, values - all can give rise to controversy and disagreement. They are usually complicated with no easy answers and are issues on which people often hold strong views based on different sets of experiences, interests and values.

Almost any topic can become controversial if individual groups offer differing explanations about events, what should happen next and how issues should be resolved, or if one side of an issue is presented in a way that raises the emotional response of those who might disagree.

The Ajebo report, *Identity and Diversity: A Curriculum Review* (DCSF 2007), stressed that “Every child needs an education that is contextualised and relevant to them. Dialogue about who they are in relation to society and what it means to be a citizen should be at the heart of this. How else will pupils be able to take on some of the difficult and controversial issues that are increasingly likely to confront them?”

‘Engaging pupils in sometimes controversial but deeply relevant issues will excite them, involve them, develop their thinking skills and both raise standards and make our country an even better place’.

“A crucial aspect of education for diversity training, at all levels, is learning how to tackle controversial issues with confidence and trust, using them to enhance critical thinking skills. If schools are to be inclusive and aspects of identity are to be examined, then this is an important skill for all teachers” (Ajebo 2007).

Oxfam (2006) has produced a valuable and informative pamphlet, *Teaching Controversial Issues*, which explores how dealing with controversial issues can enhance critical thinking skills.

“Using material which is challenging and which leads young people into discussing emotive issues can encourage them to develop the following thinking skills:

- **Information-processing skills** enable pupils to gather, sort, classify, sequence, compare and contrast information, and to make links between pieces of information.
- **Reasoning skills** enable pupils to justify opinions and actions, to draw inferences and make deductions, to use appropriate language to explain their views, and to use evidence to back up their decisions.



- **Enquiry skills** enable pupils to ask relevant questions, to plan what to do and how to research, to predict outcomes and anticipate responses, to test theories and problems, to test conclusions, and to refine their ideas and opinions.
  - **Creative thinking skills** enable pupils to generate and extend ideas, to suggest possible hypotheses, to use their imagination, and to look for alternative outcomes.
  - **Evaluation/Critical Thinking** skills enable pupils to evaluate what they read, hear and do, to learn to judge the value of their own and others' work or ideas, not to take all information at face value, and to have confidence in their own judgements.”  
(Oxfam 2006)
- The Historical Association in its TEACH Report offers a number of helpful ideas which relate to addressing controversial issues in school.
- Engaging with emotive and controversial topics is unlikely to succeed where little or no attention is paid to the learning objectives and ideas associated with similarity and difference, change and continuity, reasons and results, and interpretations and using evidence.
  - Learners have to care enough about the issues to arouse both their curiosity and their willingness to engage fully with the questions that are likely to require hard thinking and problem-solving.
  - Addressing emotive and controversial issues is best done when learners consider their own loyalties, their multiple interests and identities, and recognise the fact that everyone is both an insider or outsider to something and that their values can be conflicting and can change.
  - Opportunities are enhanced when the school adopts a whole-curricular approach. Success is more likely to be achieved if there is a clear strategy in the school for accepting that such issues should be engaged in by all students and in a range of contexts.



A number of constraints currently act as barriers to addressing emotive and controversial issues in the school.

**These include:**

- time pressures
- few incentives to take risks with content selection and pedagogy
- the limited access that teachers have to high-quality training in this area;
- the tendency of some teachers to avoid emotive and controversial topics for a variety of reasons. Some of these are well-intentioned, such as feeling that certain issues are inappropriate for particular age groups, or that they lack the maturity to grasp them, or a wish to avoid causing offence or insensitivity, or that they are best taught elsewhere in the curriculum.

Successfully addressing emotive and controversial issues helps to challenge poorly informed views and perceptions amongst pupils, challenge commonly held 'myths' and build understanding and appreciation of others.

**This requires:**

- questioning techniques to open up safe debate
- confidence to promote honesty about pluralist views
- ensuring both freedom of expression and freedom from threat
- debating fundamental moral and human rights principles
- promoting open respectful dialogue
- affirming the multiple dynamic identities we all have  
(CUE 2009)

Nancy Kline in 'Time to Think' (1999), offers very valuable ways to enhance the attributes and skills identified above. She explores ways to 'Create a Thinking Environment'.

**There are ten components in the creation of a thinking environment.**

- 1. Giving Attention:** listening to others with respect, interest and fascination. Attention, the act of listening with palpable respect and fascination, is the key to a thinking environment. When you are listening to someone, much of the quality of what you are hearing is your effect on them. Giving good attention to people makes them more intelligent. Poor attention makes them stumble over words and seem stupid. Your attention, your listening is that important.

**Giving Attention:**

*What are the components of giving someone else full attention?*

*How easy do you find it to give full attention to others?*

*Are there certain people you find easier to give full attention to than others? If so give examples.*

*What can interfere with your giving another person your full attention?*

**2. Asking Incisive Questions:** exploring assumptions that limit ideas. Telling people what they should do and think doesn't work. A question will. However any old question won't do. It has to be a question that accurately identifies the assumption and then replaces it with the exactly right freeing one. The key is listening with precision and then asking a question that frees a person from their assumption.

**Asking Incisive Questions:**

*Listen attentively to what another person is saying (to you, to others).*

*Listen for the assumptions that underlie what they are saying. In your mind only, create questions that would help the person become more aware of how their assumption(s) may be limiting their contribution to the world and him/herself.*

**3. Equality:** treating each other as thinking peers. Giving equal turns and attention. Keeping agreements and boundaries.

**4. Appreciation:** practising a five-to-one ratio of appreciation to criticism. (Carol Painter has developed what she calls the Negative Reality Norm Theory. She points out that an accurate picture of reality, according to our society, is considered to be a negative one. Society teaches us that to be positive is to be naïve and vulnerable, whereas to be critical is to be informed and sophisticated.)

**Appreciation:**

*Do you generally tend to see the world more in positive ways, or negative ways?*

*Do you focus on the good things that happen to you or do you tend to keep thinking more about the bad things.*

*When talking to young people what is the ratio of appreciative comments you make to critical comments?*

**5. Ease:** offering freedom from rush or urgency.

**Ease:**

*How realistic is it to slow down things considerably in the classroom in order to allow careful, critical thinking about an issue?*

**6. Encouragement:** moving beyond competition.

**7. Feelings:** allowing sufficient emotional release to restore thinking. For example, when someone is angry, listen just the way you would listen to an interesting idea from them.

**Feelings:**

*How comfortable are you when young people express strong feelings in the classroom?*

*Are there certain strong feelings you would feel uncomfortable hearing expressed – anger, for example?*

**8. Information:** providing a full and accurate picture of reality.

**9. Place:** creating a physical environment that says back to people. 'You matter'.

**10. Diversity:** adding quality because of the differences between us. Real diversity is achieved in groups when differences are celebrated

**Diversity:**

*On the basis of Kline's ten components, what would be important 'ground rules' that would provide the basis for creating a thinking environment in the classroom?*



Reports on the teaching of controversial issues recommend that staff confidence in the core approaches to dealing with controversial issues is reviewed in order to define professional development needs. Schools need support, structures and training to be able to develop safe environments in which constructive learning dialogues can take place.

Within schools but outside the classroom, and elsewhere in society, emotive issues arise which people can find difficult to talk about with others. To distinguish these situations from the more formal exploration of a controversial issue in the classroom, we can call these difficult conversations. Topics occur that may be hard to talk about and are very often avoided. A difficult conversation is anything you find it difficult to talk about.

In schools, difficult conversations may arise in the course of everyday interactions between members of staff, between pupils, between pupils and school staff.

*Which sorts of issues do you find difficult to raise or discuss with young people in everyday interactions outside the classroom?*

*Are there any potentially difficult conversations in relation to race, religion, diversity, violence including bullying?*

*Are you aware of the reasons for difficulty in discussing the issues? Is it to do with your values, beliefs, emotions, your identity?*

*In the light of what you have read above, what do you see as your developmental needs in your ability to facilitate exploration of controversial issues? How might you meet those needs? Who can help you to do so?*



# Addressing violent extremism and controversial issues through learner / student action teams

The terms 'Student Action Team' (Holdsworth 2006) and 'Learner Action Team' (CUE 2009) can be used interchangeably. We shall use 'Learner Action Team'.

**A Learner Action Team is “A group of learners who identify and work, preferably as part of their curriculum, on a real issue of community interest. The learners carry out research on the issue and develop solutions - either proposals for action by others or action that they themselves then take” (CUE 2009).**

In Learner Action Teams, “students take on an issue of concern to them and to the wider community, investigate it, present outcomes of their research and then develop and implement action plans to make a difference.” (Holdsworth 2005)

## **In establishing Learner Action Teams, schools:**

- trust students, particularly those who are marginalised and disillusioned;
- expect that students can and will do significant things in their community;
- enable and support students to carry out community research and action

(Australian Youth Research Centre (2003))

Learner Action Teams provide a student-centred and active educational approach to community based learning and are an effective way of developing teams which link students to their communities.

## **A key element of this approach is the building of positive self concepts by providing young people with a:**

- sense of meaning and purpose - learning experiences are seen to be real, worthwhile, and of value within the community
- sense of control - being in charge of one's own learning
- sense of belonging - working with others, developing a sense of connectedness with school and community

There is a particular value in having a community body to commission and support the Learner Action Team work, to address common problems with them, and to be an audience for the outcomes of their work.

The Learner Action Teams approach is highly relevant to the issues involved in the Prevent agenda since it can allow many and diverse student voices to be heard. It is different from other learner engaged work for the following reasons:

- Learner engagement from the start with determination of the proposed focus or topic; either learner choice of what this focus is, or substantial learner decision-making about taking it on, and how to approach it.

*Can you identify an issue (e.g. violence, racist graffiti, bullying, truancy) that currently concerns your school that could be approached through Learner Action Team activity?*

- Continued learner engagement with project decision-making and implementation
- A focus within the learners' community (geographical, social or cultural) preferably beyond the school, and
- Process of research and action by learners that intend to make a difference around the chosen focus or topic within the community

*Are there any similar approaches already in existence within your school or a school that you know well? If not, how ready is your school to engage in the Learner Action Team approach to learning? (CUE 2009)*

Critiques of traditional forms of learner participation in schools have challenged us to look at who gets to speak (and who is heard) as well as about what. Too often it is the same students, and the students already achieving success within schools.

Too often it is the compliant students - so the voices that are heard are saying things that it is safe and cosy for us to hear.

**Learner Action approaches can be used around any topic. What is common is:**

- research
- planning and action that is identified, decided and carried out by students
- teamwork
- occurring in a community setting
- in a context of solving real problems

*Do you think it is important to include young people in educational decision-making and curriculum implementation in the ways described above? What are the particular benefits to those involved?*

## Who benefits from active student participation?

Primarily it's the students who actively participate who get the most. Study after study has shown that there are academic, social, health and other benefits for students from their participation.

Second, the institutions and organisations (including schools) benefit from more effective learning and development, more cooperative environments, more exciting places to be.

And the whole of society benefits from extending our perceptions of active and positive citizens and community members.

*Can you identify any colleagues who would be keen to work with young people in this way?*

## Holdsworth (2005) offers advice for school communities who are thinking about starting out on Learner Action Team journey

1. Schools need to assess their commitment to the Learner Action Team concept and their capacity to engage with it. Schools need to be realistic but believe wholeheartedly in what they are doing.
2. Second, perhaps start small - with a group or two, with a teacher or two, who are passionate and enthusiastic and willing to change relationships and seek authentic opportunities.
3. Third, seek partnerships. An external 'commission' is a powerful starting point for a project (that students may or may not accept). It provides an external audience, realistic timelines and a common challenge for students and teachers to collaborate around.
4. Finally, document and share what you're doing and finding out - that means both successes and failures. Others will want to share your journey and learnings. Documentation is a powerful tool for reflection; that means all should share in this documentation.

*Are there any existing community based learning opportunities? Are there any potential external partners that would want to work with the school in addressing diversity issues, etc?*

# Action Plan

Here are some questions that may help you to take further steps in implementing ideas from Prevent and the 'Learning together to be safe' DfCSF toolkit.

- Have you accessed the Prevent and the 'Learning Together to be Safe' websites to identify the main recommendations?
- How can you and your colleagues begin to put into practice these recommendations? What would be the most feasible starting point(s)?
- What do you consider to be the main controversial issues for your school and the local community? What other local partners do these involve/affect? How would you prioritise these issues? What are the most effective ways to address these?
- Which 'difficult conversations' would you find hardest to engage in with young people in your school? With colleagues ? With parents ? Who could help you to work through the issues involved and how to respond most appropriately ?
- What sorts of training packages/ programmes/seminars would you find particularly helpful in addressing the issues raised in Prevent and 'Working Together to be Safe'? Are there specific workshops that would be informative and enable you and your colleagues to develop new skills?
- Are you aware of any young people in your school who might possibly be vulnerable to extremist influences? What can you and your colleagues and other agencies do to ensure the wellbeing of these young people?
- What resources are there in your community that could contribute to the safety of young people in your school? Can you specify individuals and agencies who could fulfil this role? How might you approach them and engage with them?
- How will you begin to put into practice the elements of a Thinking Environment in your interactions with young people both in and outside the classroom?
- If your school has yet to implement a Learner Action approach to addressing controversial issues, who would be the most appropriate person(s) to work with to make a start in this work?

# Resources

## Citizenship

- Association for Citizenship Teaching
- [www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/](http://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/)
- Crick, B.(2004) The Citizenship Curriculum: Neighbourhood And Global
- [http://clients.squareeye.com/uploads/dea/documents/dej\\_10\\_3\\_crick.pdf](http://clients.squareeye.com/uploads/dea/documents/dej_10_3_crick.pdf)
- DfES (2007) Diversity And Citizenship (The Ajegbo Report)
- [www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)
- Huddleston, T. and Kerr, D. (2006) Making Sense of Citizenship Hodder Education (see in particular the chapter entitled Teaching and Learning Strategies)
- [www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/main/resource.php?s285](http://www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/main/resource.php?s285)
- Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2003) Citizenship, A Scheme Of Work For KS3, (see in particular pages 44-46)
- [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/citizenship/](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/citizenship/)

## Community

- Cornwall, A. (2008) Unpacking 'Participation': Models, Meanings And Practices,
- Community Development Journal, 43 (3), 269-283
- Craig, G. (2007) Community Capacity-Building: Something Old, Something New...?,
- Critical Social Policy, 27 (3), 335-359
- Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (2010) Community Cohesion in Action QCA
- [http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/uploads/Community\\_cohesion\\_in\\_action\\_tcm8-16069.pdf](http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/uploads/Community_cohesion_in_action_tcm8-16069.pdf)

## Conflict Transformation

- Byrnes, J.D. (2002) Before Conflict: Preventing Aggressive Behaviour Scarecrow Press
- Lederach, J.P. (2003) The Little Book Of Conflict Transformation Good Books
- Rosenberg, M.B. (2000) Nonviolent Communication: A Language Of Compassion Puddle Dancer Press
- Home Office/DCSF/ACPO/YJB (2009) Safer School Partnerships Guidance HMG
- [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/safer-schools-partnership.pdf?view=Binary](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/safer-schools-partnership.pdf?view=Binary)

## Preventing Violent Extremism

- Davies, L. (2008) Educating Against Extremism Trentham Books
- DCSF (2008). Learning Together To Be Safe: A Toolkit To Support Schools In Preventing Violent Extremism
- <http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00804-2008&Holden>,
- <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/violentextremism/toolkitforschools/>
- El-Salahi, Z. (2009) Preventing Violent Extremism Through Community Work
- University of Edinburgh
- Her Majesty's Government (2008) Preventing Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Delivery, London: HMG.
- Her Majesty's Government (2008) The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England - Stopping people becoming or supporting terrorists and violent extremists, London: HMG.
- [www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=7890410](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=7890410)
- Home Office (2009) The CONTEST strategy
- <http://security.homeoffice.gov.uk/counter-terrorism-strategy/about-the-strategy1/index.html>
- Homer-Dixon, T.F. (1999) Environment, Scarcity and Violence Princeton University Press

## ‘Radicalisation’

- Meah, Y and Mellis, C. (nd) Recognising and Responding to Radicalisation
- <http://www.recora.eu/pdf/recora-final-report-en.pdf>
- Teachernet (2008) What can make a young person susceptible to becoming radicalised?  
[www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/violentextremism/issues/causes/radicalised/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/violentextremism/issues/causes/radicalised/)

## Rights of Young People

- DCSF (2009) Every Child Matters
- <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/>
- Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA)
- <http://rrsa.unicef.org.uk/>
- [www.esha.org/pdf/projects/project08\\_children03.pdf](http://www.esha.org/pdf/projects/project08_children03.pdf)
- [www.unicef.org.uk/teacher\\_support/rrs\\_award.asp](http://www.unicef.org.uk/teacher_support/rrs_award.asp)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- [www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights\\_overview.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf)
- [www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/strategyandgovernance/uncrc/unitednationsconventionontherightsofthechild/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/strategyandgovernance/uncrc/unitednationsconventionontherightsofthechild/)

## Student Action Teams/Learner Action Teams

- Australian Youth Research Centre (2003) Acting for Change – a Student Action Team Manual Department of Education & Training, Melbourne
- [www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/.../StudentActionTeamsManual2003.pdf](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/.../StudentActionTeamsManual2003.pdf)
- Holdsworth, R. (ed. 2005) Student Councils and Beyond: Students as Effective Participants in Education Decision-Making Connect Publications
- Holdsworth, R. (ed. 2006) Student Action Teams: Productive Practices in Primary and Secondary Classrooms Connect Publications



## Teaching Controversial Issues

- Citizenship Foundation (2003) Teaching about Controversial Issues
- [www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/lib\\_res\\_pdf/0118.pdf](http://www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/lib_res_pdf/0118.pdf)
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- Clarke, P. (2005) Teaching Controversial Issues: a four-step classroom strategy for clear thinking on controversial issues.
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- Kline, N. (1999) Time to Think: listening to ignite the human mind Ward Lock
- Oxfam (2006) Teaching Controversial Issues
- [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/teachersupport/cpd/controversial/files/teaching\\_controversial\\_issues.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/teachersupport/cpd/controversial/files/teaching_controversial_issues.pdf)
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- Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL):  
<http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/>
- Stone, D., Patton, B. and Heen, S. (2000) Difficult Conversations: how to discuss what matters most Penguin
- Teaching About Controversial Issues (2007)
- [www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/racistbullying/Preventing/controversialissues/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/racistbullying/Preventing/controversialissues/)

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