



Bolton Wanderers FC

Prevent Policy 2025 - 2026

Introduction

(In this policy young people refers to all those under the age of 18)

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been numerous reported occasions nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation. Within the local area report, the current assessment of radicalisation is low however this does not indicate that extremist views or radicalisation is not taking place and as a club BWFC have to ensure that its Prevent Strategy is robust and vigilant enough to counter the above.

Bolton Wanderers Football Club values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Those we engage with and all employees have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

Bolton Wanderers Football Club is committed to providing a secure environment for all, where children and young people feel safe and are kept safe. Everyone at our club recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for children and adults at risk or not.

This Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy is one element within our overall club arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and those at risk whether in our academy or Community projects or wherever we engage with. This is in line with our statutory duties set out in education legislation and national guidelines.

BWFC's Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy also draws upon DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025", HM government document "Prevent strategy: A guide for local partners in England" and the "Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015".

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 contains a duty on specified authorities, which includes all clubs including academies to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The new legislation will be measured through various inspection frameworks including the Academy Audit. The EFL have produced their own guidance on Prevent which this policy adheres to.

1. Club Ethos and Practice

When operating this Policy, BWFC uses the following accepted Governmental definition of extremism which is:

'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our club, whether from internal sources (children, staff or our board members) or external sources (supporter's groups, social media) We regard our club as a safe place where all can explore controversial issues safely. It is a place where our academy players and others can express this and our staff can facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens.

As a club BWFC recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this Policy. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect those we engage with and those who are in our care.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of young people. Education and awareness is a powerful weapon against this; equipping young people and staff with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way.

Our academy players will receive a balanced content around Prevent delivered by skilled professionals in addition to that they received in their schools, so that our young people are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and are not marginalized.

Please see notes on associated terminology on **appendix 1**

2. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act July 2015

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 was published on 12th March 2015. Section 26 of the Act places a duty on clubs in England (and Wales) to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. This duty applies to all clubs, whether publicly-funded or independent, and organisations covered by the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. The duty also applies to children's homes. Statutory guidance has been published and came into force on 1st July 2015.

Our Club, Academy and Community Trust will ensure that we:

- establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of extremism
- ensure staff understand the risk and build capabilities to deal with it
- communicate and promote the importance of the duty
- ensure staff implement the duty effectively

Duties on BWFC include:

- Effective partnership working with other local agencies, e.g. Bolton Children Safeguarding Board (BSCB), police GMP, health, etc.
- information sharing
- maintaining appropriate records
- assessing local risk of extremism (including Far Right extremism)
- demonstrating we are protecting young people
- developing clear protocols for visiting speakers
- safeguarding policies that take account of BSCB policies and procedures
- training staff to give them knowledge and confidence
- ensuring there is robust ICT protocols that filter out extremist materials

- the club shall ensure that our buildings must not be used to give a platform to extremists

Both the Premier League and EFL require these standards to be met by their member clubs and they audit safeguarding standards annually.

3. Recognising the indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Young people may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that club staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability in clubs or academies may include:

- **Identity Crisis** – the young person is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
- **Personal Crisis** – the young person may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
- **Personal Circumstances** – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student / 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;
- **Unmet Aspirations** – the young person may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
- **Experiences of Criminality** – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement /reintegration;
- **Special Educational Need** – young people may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by young people or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Code of Conduct for players and the Code of Conduct for Staff and associated Disciplinary policy for staff.

We will ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and confident enough to challenge and report it. All staff will receive training throughout all areas of the club. This will be delivered by the local Prevent team or the NWHE and FE regional Prevent Coordinator and will be proportionate to the role and the risk.

The club is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. The SPOC for our club is Joe Shaw, Head of Safeguarding.

When any member of staff has concerns that someone may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC or member of the club safeguarding team (DSO). We will help support anyone who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe someone is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences we will ensure that that person is offered assistance. Additionally, in such instances the Club/Academy and Community Trust will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

The academy will closely follow the locally agreed procedure as set out by the Bolton Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

4. Academy Staff Approach

As a football club the time spent with players from Foundation Stage through to Professional Development Phase (PDP) is significantly less than the time they spend in their schools, social environments, their home's or in their communities, however it does not absolve the Academy from a commitment to Prevent. The actions and responses of Academy staff will be in addition to the support that our young people receive in those areas.

We will ensure that our approaches help our young people build resilience to extremism and give them a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. The club will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We will encourage our players to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith. In the Professional Development Stage (PDS) there is more emphasis on Prevent via their education programme delivered by the LFE programme to prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

5. Use of External Agencies and Speakers

The club encourages the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our young people/scholars, this is more so with scholars in the PDS, however, there is a

vetting process to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages or that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the club's values and ethos. Academy staff supervise all input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- Any messages do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism or seek to radicalise young people through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies
- Activities are properly embedded in the academy plan.
- Activities are matched to the needs of children
- Activities are carefully evaluated by the club to ensure that they are effective

Where external groups hire any facilities within the club/hotel vetting takes place to ensure extremist activities are not taking place.

See Prevent Risk Assessment Stadium/Hotel

6. Whistleblowing

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation young people and staff will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to whistle blow or raise any issue in confidence.

Please refer to the separate Whistleblowing Policy.

7. Safer Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting of all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our club will follow government and EFL guidelines on safer recruitment best practice in football settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked and that we complete and maintain a Single Central Record of such vetting checks.

See BWFC Safer Recruitment Policy and Academy Safer Recruitment process

Therefore, by adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an ongoing culture of vigilance within our club and staff team we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

8. Standards for Teachers/Tutors/Coaches in our academy.

The Academy has a separate Code of Conduct for Staff however even though not teachers the following is expected of all staff working with young people.

The 2011 (updated 2013) Standards for Teachers (part two) states:

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements, define the behaviour and attitudes that set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within by:

- **Treating children with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect,** and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position

- **Having regard for the need to safeguard children' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others**
- **Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs**
- Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways that exploit children' vulnerability, or might lead them to break the law.

Staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of BWFC and maintain high standards. They must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks that set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

NB the phrase **'fundamental British values'** refers to the definition of extremism as articulated in the Prevent Strategy, which was launched in June 2011 and updated recently. It includes the need for clubs to explore with children and students **'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'**.

9. Policy Adoption, Monitoring and Review

This Policy was considered and adopted by the board in line with their overall duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2019' within BWFC's overall safeguarding policy in relation to children and adults at risk. It is also compliant with duties as set out in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

This Policy will be made available via the club's website, published on the club Intranet/PMA for staff and a hard copy will be made available on request.

BWFC will review this policy annually prior to the start of a new season but may adopt any amendments outside this timeframe in accordance with any new legislation or guidance.

10. Supporting young people who are travelling/have travelled from abroad from specific locations

BWFC has a Commercial Football operation linked to the Hotel and young people travel from locations worldwide to the club to take part in football related activities. Staff must ensure that they are aware of their duty in respect of Prevent.

Young people travelling from abroad from specific locations may well have been exposed to extremist views and be on the verge of radicalisation

Any concerns in relation to extremism as identified above should be reported to the SPOC or DSO. If any of the indicators of concern are noted regarding an extremism risk identified then consideration will be given to making a referral to Channel, the Channel panel will suggest appropriate intervention. This will be from a safeguarding perspective around a number of issues that will encompass extremism vulnerabilities. If any responses/discussions give further indicators for concern around extremism, then the Local Security and Partnership Officer will be contacted.

19/09/21

11. LINKS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Prevent Tragedies

<https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/what-you-can-do/>

Promoting British Values through SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural.)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a758c9540f0b6397f35f469/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

Channel Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance/channel-duty-guidance-protecting-people-susceptible-to-radicalisation-accessible>

Prevent Duty (new guidance and consultations doc)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales-accessible>

Prevent Duty (Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e5a5bd3f69457ff1035fe2/14.258_HO_Prevent+Duty+Guidance_v5d_Final_Web_1_.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

Appendix 1 – Associated terminology

Al-Qaeda - An international organization of loosely affiliated groups/cells that carry out attacks and bombings in the attempt to disrupt the economies and influence of Western nations and advance Islamic extremism.

British- People who are the inhabitants of Britain (e.g. citizens of England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man or one of the Channel Islands, collectively known as the United Kingdom) or an inhabitant of a British overseas territory

Channel – A key element of the Prevent Strategy; Channel is about safeguarding children and adults from being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity. It is about early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before illegality occurs

English Defence League (EDL) - The English Defence League is a far right, street protest movement, which opposes what it considers to be a 'spread of Islamism', and Islamic extremism in the United Kingdom.

Democratic Football Lads Alliance - A group with similar views to above but based around football 'fans'

Ethnicity - This is linked to distinctive shared social, linguistics, physical (e.g. skin colour) cultural and geographical heritage and norms. Religious belonging may be part of these norms. Every person has an ethnicity. To belong to an ethnic group, an individual must see themselves as a member and be seen as others as being a member of the group

Extremism - One who advocates or resorts to ideologies and measures beyond the norm, in politics and religion often using violence and terror tactics to make their views known, or to gain power.

Ideology- A set of ideas and beliefs of a group, religious or political party

Identity - An umbrella term used to describe an individual's understanding of him or herself; identity is influenced by many factors, gender, ethnicity, religion, nationality, culture, family etc.

Media - The means of communication that reaches large numbers of people e.g. the television, newspapers, and the internet

Propaganda - Ideas or statements that are often false or exaggerated and that are spread in order to help a cause

Islamophobia - A hatred or fear of Muslims, their religion and sometimes-related politics or culture.

Islamist - A western term used to describe an extreme Muslim usually politicised

Jihad- Personal struggle in everyday life; striving to achieve a goal; also used to mean taking up arms if necessary

Nationalism - a feeling that people have of being loyal to and proud of their country often with the belief that it is better and more important than other countries

Nationality - The status of belonging to a particular nation by origin, birth, or naturalization

Racism - This term refers to the deeply rooted but groundless belief that certain groups are inherently inferior to others. Racism is expressed through attitudes, behaviours and institutional policies and procedures. It disadvantages certain groups in terms of housing, job opportunities and education. Some White people experience racism (for example people from Irish, Jewish or Traveller backgrounds).

Radical - A word that describes a person who favours extreme or fundamental change in existing institutions or in political, social, or economic conditions

Resilience - The ability to recover quickly from change, or misfortune

Right wing - A conservative or reactionary element in a political party or other organization, often associated with fascism, nationalism and racism.

Social media - Forms of electronic communication (web sites, social networking and blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content e.g. videos.

Stereotypes - This involves making generalised assumptions about a person or group; applying these assumptions; expecting people to conform to them

Terrorism - The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organised group against people or property with the intention of intimidating individuals, coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons.

Terrorist - One that engages in acts or an act of terrorism

Xenophobia - An unreasonable fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers, or of that, which is different, foreign or strange.

Policy to be reviewed: September 2026

Policy Approved by: David Ray

Role: Chief Executive Officer

Signed: 

Date: 19 February 2026

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