Home Office

Interim Guidance to support the management of Non-Ideological Extreme Violence concerns

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Purpose and Scope

1. This interim guidance has been developed collaboratively with frontline practitioners and Government departments to help partners ensure that concerns about non-ideological extreme violence (NIEV) risks are managed consistently and with clear ownership, support and oversight. It has been developed to support frontline practitioners, including those working in social care, community safety, education, health and policing.

2. This guidance applies where there are NIEV-related concerns, but the person is not considered at risk of becoming involved in, or supporting, terrorism. People who are considered to be at risk of becoming involved in, or supporting, terrorism should be referred to Prevent in the usual way (see later section on Prevent). A clearly identifiable ideology is not mandatory for a Prevent referral.[1]

3. This guidance applies to children and adults and should be used in line with existing legal duties, thresholds and procedures relevant to the person and the circumstances. This guidance does not create new statutory duties, structures or processes, and should be read alongside existing safeguarding, public protection, policing and Prevent guidance.

4. The guidance strongly encourages partners to use established local arrangements to manage NIEV concerns that fall outside of the scope of Prevent, where the person is not considered at risk of becoming a terrorist or supporting terrorism.

5. This interim guidance is not intended to pre-judge the outcome of Phase 2 of the Southport Inquiry. Phase 2 of the Southport Inquiry is examining, among other things, the adequacy of arrangements in England and Wales for managing the risk from individuals at risk of extreme violence, where ideology is not the primary driver.

Non-Ideological Extreme Violence

6. We have developed a working definition of NIEV for the purposes of this guidance and to support the development of relevant policies for managing NIEV risks. The definition is not statutory, legal, or operational in nature:

   The use or threat of extreme violence, not driven by a clear ideological purpose, which is communicative in nature and intended to shock, intimidate or outrage the public or a section of the public. [i]

[1] Key principles of Prevent (accessible) - GOV.UK

7. Current research on NIEV suggests there is no single profile or pathway. The drivers of NIEV are complex, multifaceted, and can vary substantially between cases. This makes it challenging for a definition or explanatory framework to account for all manifestations. Engagement with extreme violence is rarely attributable to a single cause. Practitioners should caution against using single-cause explanations, including those that seek to explain acts of violence solely through mental ill-health or a fascination with violence. Cases are shaped by a complex combination of individual, social, psychological, and environmental factors. Current evidence suggests that younger age, neurodiversity, mental health difficulties, social isolation, and adverse life experiences are among the most commonly present risk factors[2]. However, these are not predictive or causal in isolation.

8. Some common features of NIEV have been identified and are described below. These features often characterise an individual's pathway to NIEV but are not seen in all cases. Local risk assessments should consider the interaction of multiple factors within the individual's wider circumstances and needs. Professional judgement and case-specific assessment remain crucial and necessary.

    - **Intense Grievance:** A feature of NIEV can be the framing of violence as a justified response to a perceived grievance, such as mistreatment, humiliation, rejection, or injustice. These grievances might become intensely personally significant, with individuals developing a persistent preoccupation that can come to shape their identity. Over time, the grievance may become central to how they understand their experiences and justify their actions, including the use of violence.

    - **Hatred towards humankind/society:** Grievances can develop into a hatred of society or parts of society, which are blamed for an individual's dissatisfaction with their own life or perception of marginality. Violence against society can then be seen as a retributive act or as a way of reasserting control.

    - **Violence fascination:** NIEV individuals might have a persistent, intense preoccupation with violence, violent ideation, or violent acts. This might be accompanied by obsessive rumination, emotional investment, or fantasising about committing violence. Behaviours that manifest might include consuming or producing violent content, expressing admiration for past attackers, or repeatedly referencing violent themes in communication. It is important to note that this behaviour is seen in both non-ideological casework and ideological casework.

[2] Verian (2026) Non-Ideological Extreme Violence (NIEV) Document Review, Home Office, Sept 2026

- **Participation in violent online environments:** This can include subcultures that glorify violence such as the True Crime Community (TCC)[3], incentivise violence through coercive sadistic networks or normalise violence through broader ecosystems that allow access to extreme violence content[4] and often desensitise users to harm.

Case study: Northumberland County Council has established an enhanced Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), including a dedicated multi-agency case management meeting jointly led by Children's and Adult Social Care, with representation from health, education, youth justice and policing. The forum coordinates support for people assessed as requiring immediate intervention due to risks to their safety or wellbeing, including cases where they may also present a wider risk to the public. By bringing together key decision-makers, the meeting enables timely information sharing, clear risk ownership, coordinated support planning, and lawful multi-agency risk management. Where Prevent-related concerns are identified, these are referred to Counter Terrorism Policing for assessment, while the MASH continues to manage the individual's wider needs and risks.

Statutory Responsibilities

9. Existing statutory responsibilities remain unchanged. Where relevant, these require practitioners to consider both the risks a person may pose to others, and the risks to the person themselves. Practitioners should use established safeguarding and risk management pathways, including MAPPA, Violence Reduction Units, Community Safety, Local Policing, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Early Help, Children's Social Care, Youth Offending Services, Adult Safeguarding, Family Support Services, Vanguards and Mental Health Services to manage people at risk of committing extreme violence. These arrangements should be reviewed to enable sufficient flexibility for partners, informed by professional judgement and a multi-agency understanding of the presenting concerns, to identify the most appropriate pathway to manage these risks.

10. While there is no instruction that additional structures should be established, this does not preclude local partners from putting in place new or enhanced proportionate arrangements for instance, where they believe existing structures are not sufficient to manage risk. This may include convening a multi-agency practitioner meeting to support appropriate information sharing, develop a full picture of the risks and vulnerabilities surrounding a person, and enable coordinated discussion and decision making. Such arrangements may be particularly valuable in high-risk cases where needs are complex.

[3] The True Crime Community (TCC) is a distinct community not to be confused with mainstream interest in true crime documentaries/podcasts etc. TCC fascination with perpetrators is more engrained and participants are more likely to identify with and potentially sympathise with or celebrate perpetrators. TCC is linked to the school massacre fandom and can also be seen as encompassing a wider set of perpetrators including ideological mass killers as well as some serial killers.

[4] Such as gore sites or the wider 'edgesphere'. The edgesphere is composed of an ecosystem of online subcultures, fandoms, and digital communities that normalize, celebrate, and commodify violence, trauma, and sadism.

11. For children, when approaching any safeguarding considerations, practitioners should apply Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (WTSC) and the Children's Social Care Framework 2026 alongside this guidance. The Children's Social Care system is intended to respond to children who are experiencing harm. Some of these children may also cause harm within their families or the wider community. Any response should consider the child's needs holistically and support them by addressing factors that may be driving harmful behaviour. Children's Social Care may provide support directly or refer to other appropriate services. Concerns about violence or other harm should inform proportionate, multi-agency assessment of the risks posed by and to the child together with relevant vulnerabilities and protective factors.

12. In Phase 1 of the Southport Inquiry, the Chair highlighted the importance of ensuring that information and advice from schools and education colleagues is given appropriate weight in decision making where a child poses risks to others. The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 strengthens the role of education and childcare settings within multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. For policing in England, this means ensuring that, where police are involved in considering the risk that a child may pose to others, the perspective of the child's school or education setting should be actively sought where relevant, properly considered, and given appropriate weight alongside other safeguarding, health, social care and policing information. This is particularly important where concerns are raised by teachers or schools with expertise, including but not limited to Alternative Provision, who may have sustained observation of the child and their interactions with peers. Devolved Governments may wish to consider similar structures, where child protection arrangements and relevant legal provisions differ.

Case study: Several bodies, including the Birmingham Children's Safeguarding Partnership, are developing enhanced screening tools to support safeguarding practitioners to understand the risk a child or young person may pose to others. These tools are designed to ensure that practitioners systematically consider a wider range of risk factors, including cases where a young person demonstrates a fascination with extreme violence. By providing a more structured and evidence-informed approach to understanding both need and risk, the tools aim to improve the quality and consistency of professional judgement, enabling more effective and graduated multi-agency decision making, risk management and intervention to protect the public.

Risk Ownership

13. **In all circumstances, practitioners must ensure that all relevant statutory responsibilities are met when determining risk ownership.** Existing frameworks allocate risk ownership where thresholds and criteria apply. When a case is transferred, referred or closed, practitioners should record the

decision, rationale and actions taken, including how relevant statutory responsibilities have been met, the onward route, and confirmation that the receiving service has formally accepted responsibility for continued oversight and risk management. Where no single framework or agency can assume ownership, relevant partners should agree appropriate risk management arrangements. These could include agreeing a lead agency, a coordinated multi-agency plan and arrangements for reviewing and supporting interim risk management.

14. Unresolved risk should be escalated. Partners should use an established safeguarding, policing or public protection escalation route where risk remains. Where no suitable route exists, local partners should jointly agree and record an appropriate escalation route and/or joint approach to managing risk involving senior leads. Potential public protection risks should be notified to local policing to enable appropriate assessment and oversight.

Case study: Cardiff Council has established a dedicated multi-agency panel to coordinate a non-statutory response outside existing multi-agency frameworks for people who do not meet the Prevent threshold, but lower-level risks remain. Bringing together representatives from Prevent, Youth Justice, Early Help and community organisations, including sports clubs, the panel develops and implements bespoke plans, monitors progress and keeps risk under review. This combination of local authority early help and community-based support provides a structured pathway for timely, proportionate intervention for vulnerable young people who may not meet the threshold for existing intervention, helping prevent vulnerabilities from escalating into more serious risks. If concerns increase, cases can rapidly be re-referred to Prevent for assessment, while the panel continues to coordinate support for the individual's wider needs and risks.

Prevent

15. Where there is a concern that a person is at risk of becoming involved in, or supporting, terrorism, a Prevent referral should be made using the National Referral Form[5]. When these concerns are not present, the person is not eligible for Prevent support, and alternative local support services should be considered.

16. The Notice, Check, Share process, which was updated on 28 August 2026, should be used to gather and consider relevant information for Prevent referrals[6]. **A clearly identifiable ideology is not mandatory for a Prevent referral.** Where concerns overlap or Prevent relevance is uncertain, practitioners should still consider whether to make a Prevent referral. Where there is an imminent threat to life or immediate risk of serious harm, professionals should contact the emergency services and follow local emergency procedures.

17. A decision by counter-terrorism police that a person does not meet the threshold for Prevent support relates specifically to whether they are at risk of becoming involved in, or supporting, terrorism. It should not be interpreted as

[5] National Prevent referral form
[6] Notice, check, share - GOV.UK

a judgement that the person poses no wider risk of violence or harm. Where Prevent thresholds are not met, the referral may be returned to the original referrer or referred to an appropriate local service. Practitioners should identify whether residual vulnerabilities, safeguarding needs, violence risk or public protection concerns require further assessment, support or oversight.

18. When cases are being signposted from Prevent to other services for support, practitioners and their partners, including Counter Terrorism Policing and Local Policing, should consider the statutory arrangements set out in paragraphs 9-14 for assessing and managing risk, identifying appropriate local pathways, maintaining clear ownership and escalating unresolved concerns. In addition, practitioners should reassure themselves that they have effective processes in place to:
    - understand the risks associated with NIEV where an individual is not considered at risk of becoming involved in, or supporting, terrorism and is not suitable for Prevent support;
    - signpost people to relevant safeguarding services where there are residual vulnerabilities not linked to terrorism;
    - notify Local Policing of any associated public protection risks.

Information Sharing

19. Data protection law supports the timely and proactive sharing of information to prevent harm. As per UK GDPR legislation, there are seven lawful bases to process information, and organisations should identify an appropriate lawful basis to do so[7]. It is likely that 'public task', 'legal obligation' or 'recognised legitimate interests' will be more appropriate than consent for safeguarding and welfare purposes.

20. Relevant agencies have a duty to share information where it relates to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children[8]. Relevant agencies include organisations listed under section 11(1) of the Children Act 2004, such as local authorities, Integrated Care Boards, NHS Trusts, Police, Prison and Probation Services, Youth Justice and Youth Custody Services. In due course, designated childcare and education agencies will also be included. Where the conditions of the duty are met, information must be shared. This includes relevant information about any other person connected to a child where it concerns the child's welfare and safety. The statutory guidance provides further detail clarifying that consent is rarely an appropriate lawful basis for sharing information.

[7] A guide to lawful basis | ICO
[8] DfE stat guidance template

21. Personal information can be shared between services where it is necessary, proportionate and lawful to do so. **It may be more harmful not to share information when there is a genuine risk of harm**.

Useful resources

- A 10-step guide to sharing information to safeguard children (ICO)[9]
- Prevent and the Channel process in the NHS: information sharing and governance (DHSC)[10]
- Safeguarding adults: sharing information (SCIE)[11]
- Information Sharing to safeguard children and young people statutory guidance[12]

[i] The evidence base relating to NIEV remains emergent and subject to considerable limitations. Current understanding is derived from a relatively small number of cases, varying international approaches and a developing body of research. Given the NIEV evidence base remains in the early stages of development, we are reliant on existing evidence on risk assessment from terrorism, extremism and wider violence literature.

[9] A 10-step-guide-to-sharing-information-to-safeguard-children | ICO
[10] Prevent and the channel process in the nhs information sharing and governance - GOV.UK
[11] safeguarding adults: sharing information - SCIE
[12] Information-sharing-to-safeguard-children-and-young-people | DfE