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Dear Parent/Carer,

**Keeping Children Safe in Our Schools**

I know that you are aware of the duties we all have as parents, carers and as professionals who work with children and young people to do our very best to keep them safe. For school staff and other professionals, these duties are a statutory responsibility. They require schools to do everything they can to protect children from physical abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and anything else that may harm them. Some of these duties come about as a result of specific legislation, in addition to the general requirement to keep children safe. An example of this is the responsibility that schools have to protect children and young people from radicalisation as part of the Prevent duty. Luton is proud of its diversity and sees this in action in so many ways. We all want to see Luton thrive and develop into a place where we are all proud to live, learn and work. The role schools play in all aspects of keeping children and young people safe is a vital component of this ambition.

**Understanding the Prevent Duty**

Nationally over 850 people of interest to the police have travelled to Syria and Iraq to join terrorist groups. We are at the same time seeing Far Right groups exploit the migration crisis to recruit young people to their disturbing cause. Prevent is about safeguarding. It is a sad but unfortunate fact that there have been cases around the country, including in Luton, where people have been drawn into joining terrorist and extremist groups.

The duty requires all schools and specified organisations to uphold and promote the fundamental values (referred to as British Values) of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It places a responsibility on schools to ensure that staff are fully engaged in being vigilant about radicalisation and that, in line with ***all*** existing safeguarding advice and practice, that they work alongside other professional bodies, agencies and parents to ensure that pupils are safe from harm.

Luton Borough Council is playing a key role in supporting schools in this respect and in making sure that they understand and implement this legal duty. The council requires all schools to undertake the duty diligently and within the frameworks that exist for its implementation.

**Information about Implementation**

Information on Prevent has been circulating in Luton from non local authority sources and the following section aims to clarify any confusion on this matter. The local process which schools follow when they have a safeguarding concern to raise is as follows:

1. If a school has a concern they will record this in line with their own safeguarding recording process (this will be outlined within each school's safeguarding policy and is available on their individual websites).
2. Schools seek advice. Locally we have defined this as being through the local authority Early Help Hub whose staff advise and support on next steps.
3. In most cases our expectation is that there will be a conversation with the parent/carer of a child who is felt to be vulnerable, unless there is an indication of significant harm which is in line with all other safeguarding procedures.
4. There is no requirement for a school, nor would we expect a school, to devise a separate Prevent policy as it should form part of safeguarding under specific circumstances similar to that for all other threats to the safety of children.
5. All schools in Luton already promote respect, diversity and tolerance within their curriculum so that the values expressed in the duty are embedded within the existing ethos of the school.

**Further Information**

The following we believe are useful reference points to get more detailed information about these issues:

The general principles that schools should follow are set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447595/KCSIE_July_2015.pdf

Each school has its own child protection policy describing the procedures which will be followed when concerns arise about a pupil which will be freely available to all parents.

The government has also issued advice to schools on implementing the Prevent Duty:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance__England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf

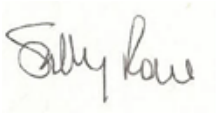
**The Prevent Duty:** Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

Further advice on the practical steps schools can take when implementing the Prevent duty is also available on the Educate Against Hate website: www.educateagainsthate.com

Locally the local authority Education in Safeguarding website has useful information on this area
http://www.luton.gov.uk/Education_and_learning/safety-in-education/Pages/Staying-Safe-in-Education.aspx

Again, locally the Let's Talk About It web portal contains useful information on Prevent – we would encourage parents to review this information at www.ltai.info

Yours sincerely



Sally Rowe
**Corporate Director People**