**Prevent: Safeguarding vulnerable individuals**

**Language and terminology guidance**

**Purpose:**

* Education Scotland and the Scottish Government recognise the importance of using appropriate and accurate language when leading discussions with children and young people, and this is particularly important when exploring current global social and political issues. Doing so minimises the risk of any individual feeling targeted, offended, stigmatised and/or unfairly represented.
* This Language guidance provides an overview of some of the appropriate terminology which is used when discussing the themes, topics and groups who feature across the spectrum of violent extremism and terrorism both in Scotland and internationally.
* You are encouraged to be reflective – think carefully before selecting the right words for your context and ask yourself what you really mean.

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| **Discussion Topic** | **Safe Language** | **Problematic Language** |
| **General** | **Criminals** – It may be preferable to refer to terrorists as criminals (and/or murderers) who seek to undermine the values that we all share. This devalues their supposed cause. | **Extremists/Extremism** – defined in the UK Government’s Prevent strategy since 2011 as **‘*the 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’*.**  This is problematic language because the concept of ‘British values’ can cause offence and could play into the hands of groups who seek to assert that there is an inherent conflict between being British and being Muslim. |
| **Violent Extremists** – those who use violence to further their cause. The good thing about this label is that it makes the violence the focus. | **Radical** and **extreme** are adjectives that should **not** be used to describe groups, activities or individuals in this context. |
| **Terrorism** is defined in the 2000 Act as: ***the use or threat of action designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public … for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.*** | **‘War on terror’** and similar phrases which use imagery of battles should be avoided. These play into the military and violent language and symbolism of the narratives used by terrorist groups. |
| **Values** | **Shared Values -** Curriculum for Excellence defines and supports learning about the values and attitudes that our children and young people need to become responsible citizens who respect other people, different beliefs and cultures. Young people learn how these are fundamental in both local and global communities. | **British Values** – this language is problematic because the concept of ‘British values’ can cause offence and could play into the hands of groups who seek to assert that there is an inherent conflict between being British and being Muslim. |
| **Prevent** | **Safeguarding Vulnerable Individuals** – a concerted effort has been made to position activity in Scotland to prevent radicalisation as an additional safeguarding issue. This underscores that Prevent operates in a pre-criminal space and has the wellbeing of the vulnerable individual as its primary concern. |  |
| **Extreme Right Wing or Left Wing** | **Extreme Right Wing or Left Wing** – thoseorganisations or individuals who have rejected democratic means of achieving their aims and objectives (and therefore embraced violence). | **Domestic Extremism** – although this is the correct and widely used phrase to describe the threat from a range of groups including the Extreme Right Wing or Left Wing it is problematic because the use of ‘domestic’ to describe British nationals engaging in such activity suggests that British nationals involved in other causes are somehow foreign. It therefore plays up difference and feeds the ‘them and us’ world view being spread by terrorist groups. |
| **Far Right** – thosegroups or individuals who do not go so far as to espouse violence.  **Electoral far right** - this would include those parties who have stood in elections such as the British National Party or National Front. |  |
| **Northern Ireland Related Terrorism** | **Criminals** – It would be preferable to refer to criminals or those opposed to peace, as these terms devalue their supposed cause. | **Terrorists** – although correct and acceptable to many in the community, it may be better to avoid using where possible, replacing with ‘Criminals’ instead. |
| **Dissident Republicans** – this term is widely used for those groups who are violently opposed to the peace process. While not ideal language, especially within the wider Republican community, the term Dissident has become more associated with violent types in NI rather than its more common meaning. | **Republicans** - Regularly (but incorrectly) used to refer to parties/groups who countenance the use of violence to promote Irish unity. To be avoided except in the correct historical or current political context. |
| **Loyalist Paramilitary Groups –** this term is widely used for those groups who violently oppose Irish Republicanism. | **Loyalists** - Acceptable when used accurately in the context of supporters of the PUP (Progressive Unionist Party), otherwise best avoided due to overtones of militancy. |
| **Al-Qa’eda Inspired Violent Extremists** | **Al-Qa’eda Inspired Violent Extremists (AQIVE)**  This phrase is considered to be the best way of describing the various terrorist groups and individuals who align to the Islamist ‘single narrative’.  Al-Qa’eda is a terrorist organisation whose leadership is based in Afghanistan.  **ISIL/ISIS** – refer to the terrorist organisation Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, or Islamic State in Iraq and Sham (the Arabic word for Syria). The acronym for the Arabic name for the group is DAESH | **Islamist extremist/terrorist** – there is always a danger in using the word ‘Islamist’ as non-expert audiences are likely to hear ‘Islamic’ and all audiences will make a connection to the Muslim faith. This phrase is best avoided.  The terms **Jihad/jihadist** can cause offence in Muslim communities when used in place of terrorism/terrorist. This is because Jihad simply means ‘struggle’ and within the context of Islam it can represent a range of challenges from the spiritual and physical challenge observed through Ramadan through to simply trying to be a better person. The word is most commonly used in the media as a reference to military jihad or a holy war. This is problematic and can reinforce the propaganda of groups who attempt to portray their violent acts as having a religious justification.  **Islamic State or IS** – Avoid these names as it conveys a sense of legitimacy and statehood on the terrorist organisation ISIS.  **The Caliphate**. Many Muslims would find it highly offensive to hear mentions to the Caliphate. This term is best avoided, instead referring to ‘territory controlled by ISIS’. |