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Teacher practice and the pre-crime space: Prevent, safeguarding and teacher engagement with extremism and radicalisation

Key words: Religious education, pre-crime, safeguarding, Prevent, extremism, vulnerability.

Abstract

School involvement in government initiatives to combat radicalisation is an international phenomena, in the UK government has focused on the role of the teacher in detecting radicalisation through the Teachers' Standards of 2012, the Counter Terrorism Act 2015 and the activation of Prevent in 2011. The Prevent Duty has been described as a geographical pre-crime space characterised by surveillance, risk, fear and the notion of the pre-criminal (Heath-Kelly 2017). This article explores the way teachers understand their practice in this pre-crime space. The data discussed in this study is part of a larger study that interrogates the way teachers approach the teaching of Islam in schools. This article reports on a series of dialogical interviews and analyses the way 57 teachers with a particular responsibility for Religious Education have negotiated this new role. It argues that teachers commonly situate their practice in relation to Prevent in the context of a safeguarding agenda and that most legitimise their role through the employment of a discourse of vulnerability. The research suggests that the ways teachers approach issues of extremism in the classroom is in part informed by their existing views on racism, social class and political ideologies.

Key words: Prevent Duty, safeguarding, extremism, vulnerability, radicalisation

Introduction

An outcome of terrorist attacks associated with radical Islam in the UK has been a focus on the role of schools and educators in preventing the rise of extremism through interrupting the process through which they become radicalised (Miller 2018, Mattsson *et al*, 2016). The aim of this article is to explore the ways in which teachers interpret and understand that role in the context of their wider practice in schools. The relationship between the roles that teachers are expected to perform in terms of learning, safeguarding, and the security agenda as outlined by the Counter Terrorism Act 2015 is complex, trenchant and controversial (Shiraz 2017). The article analyses the data generated from fifty-seven dialogical interviews with teachers with a special responsibility for Religious Education (RE) in primary and secondary schools in England. The focus on teachers with a responsibility for RE is because the data analysed in this paper is taken from a larger study on the way teachers approach the teaching of Islam in the school curriculum. Prevent defines extremism as 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values' (HMG 2015)

and radicalisation as the process through which individuals become extremists. The expectation that teachers will play a role in the prevention of extremism has international resonance as fear of radicalisation is now an international issue (Shirazi 2017). The article argues that most teachers normalise their new duties under Prevent as comparable to their other responsibilities in the context of safeguarding. The analysis adds to the existing critiques of Prevent in education through its consideration of the way teachers engage with surveillance of pupils through discourses of vulnerability and risk (Busher et al 2017, Bryan, 2017). The data is part of a larger study that examines the ways in which the approach to the teaching of Islam is analysed but the data in this article refers only to the interviews that discussed Prevent, radicalisation and extremism.

The article outlines the policy and political context in which teacher involvement with counter terrorism in schools has escalated. It discusses the growing literature on the components of the school as a pre-crime geography before describing the research itself.

Background

European governments and agencies have focused on schools as significant agencies in the struggle against extremism. In Germany there are initiatives to teach young people about political and cultural belonging in Muslim schools (Beck 2018) and in France the government has introduced measures to promote secular values in schools as well as a raft of new legislation to combat extremism (Chrisafis 2016).

Like the French the UK government has combined school based strategies with new laws in order to create a comprehensive counter terrorist environment. Since 2000 the UK has enacted six main pieces of legislation to deal with terrorism; the Terrorism Act 2000, the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, the Terrorism Act 2006, the Counter Terrorism Act 2008 but it is only the most recent, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 that places specific duties on schools and universities to act to prevent the growth of extremism. The first iteration of Contest, the counter terrorist policy developed by the then Labour Government in 2003 was significant in that it represented the first attempt by a European state to develop a specific response to extremist ideology. It was made up of four strands; Pursue, Protect, Prepare and Prevent, the strand that included education as a possible site of counter terrorist activity.

The identification of education as a focus for combatting the rise of terrorism is reflected in the increased preoccupation with radicalisation in educational policy and guidelines (O'Donnell O'Donnell). In 2007 the Teachers' Standards required only that teachers 'hold positive values' (TDA. 2007. 7) but in 2012, the new Teachers' Standards required teachers 'not to undermine fundamental British values' and referenced Prevent as the source of its definition and understanding of British values (DFE 2012). The most overt sign that the prevention of radicalisation is now part of teacher professionalism is its inclusion in inspection frameworks. Until 2014 the Ofsted Handbook for inspection made no reference to extremism or radicalisation but after this date Ofsted inspectors are required to consider whether schools

actively promoted tolerance and respect for people of other faiths and cultures (Ofsted 2014).

Teachers are now required by Prevent to report individuals at risk from radicalisation, to be able to identify those who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorist activity and to ensure that in their teaching they promote a set of values (fundamental British values) that are designed to prevent young people from being attracted to extremism in the first place (Farrell 2016). Teacher practice therefore, has been expanded so that teachers are positioned at every stage of the possible radicalisation process. Through their practice teachers are meant to ensure that radicalisation does not happen, if radicalisation is happening teachers are meant to identify it and report it and if teachers believe that it might happen in the future they are also expected to act.

Literature

In the aftermath of the 2005 London July bombings there has been an ongoing debate on the causes of extremism and how to prevent future attacks. The scholarly fields of extremism, radicalisation and terrorism are characterised by competing and contradictory definitions and understandings of what constitutes extremism, why and how radicalisation takes place and the relationship between terrorism and ideology (Kundnani 2012, Husband and Alam 2011, Awan and Blackmore, 2016 O'Donnell: 2015).

The rise of the pre-crime space

The dream of being able to stop crime before it happens was characterised as pre-crime in a short story by the science fiction writer Philip K Dick 1967. In the story the protagonist comes to believe that although criminalising individuals before they commit a crime undermines their liberty it is a price worth paying for a safer crime free society. The privileging of public safety over personal freedom in Dick's story is echoed in the early legal discourses on pre-crime in law. Writing in 1998 Professor of Law at Harvard, Carol Steiker in a ground breaking article famously observed that the contemporary legal imagination was shaped by a preventative turn. She argued though, that although the 'preventative state is all the rage these days' commentators have not even recognised the issues the topic as a distinct phenomenon either 'doctrinally or conceptually' (Steiker 1998, 774). In the intervening years there has been a dramatic transformation in the political and legal cultures that regulate the relationships between the individual and government leading to a consolidation of a preventative state (Dershowitz 2009) and an emerging critique of the nature and power of that state (Zedner 2010, Ramsay 2018)

Beyond the In England policy on families and at-risk children was increasingly framed by notions that prevention was pragmatic and possible through the identification of risk factors that could establish a link between family-based factors and the risk of offending (Parton 2008, Graham and Utting 1996).

In her analysis of the evolution of the Prevent strategy Charlotte Heath Kelly described the interlocking and shifting strands of policy and political initiatives as a geographical pre-criminal space characterised by assumptions about the nature of

agency, knowledge and the nature of the state (Heath-Kelly 2017). In the context of education this pre-crime space is characterised by three central themes, safeguarding, risk and vulnerability and the literature around these themes is explored in the next section.

In counter terrorism policy vulnerability to extremism is compared to vulnerability from sexual abuse or drug abuse. The Home Office (2011) claims that 'Safeguarding vulnerable people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm', and schools and universities embed Prevent within their safeguarding procedures. The notion of safeguarding is a relatively stable concept both in the academic literature and in policy but more recently it has been problematized particularly in the field of social work and in relation to the expanding role of the state (Parton 2014) or in relation to Prevent (McKendrick and Finch 2017). In policy and official guidelines on the prevention of extremism in education safeguarding usually appears as a politically neutral term that refers to a range of processes. In mainstream social work literature safeguarding is defined as an umbrella term that refers to practices and policies previously associated with adult protection and child protection and it is acknowledged as a term that refers to complex scenarios that are further complicated by the demand for sensitive and complicated multi agency interventions (Chisness and Kelly 2016, Wate and Boulton 2015). Where it is analysed as a concept it is usually in the context of a discussion on the effectiveness of the strategies and mechanisms that contribute to effective safeguarding and not in the context of either what safeguarding constitutes or its legitimacy as an approach to risk. For example, a major literature review of safeguarding and children sponsored by the NFER acknowledges the contested nature of several key terms but the meaning of the term safeguarding is assumed (Coppard 2008, Martin et al: 2010). Similarly safeguarding is often critiqued in the way it is enacted and common issues identified as problematic are, the tendency to objectify individuals and families (Koubel: 2016), negotiating the balance between risks and rights, especially in relation to adults (White and Romeo 2017) and determining the extent and nature of intervention (Linden and Webb 2016).

The safeguarding narratives dominant in education and other fields make a number of assumptions about the relationship between individuals and the state that not only shape our understanding of abuse but legitimate certain approaches to it (Parton, 2006). The first of these assumptions lies in the notion that it is possible for professionals working alongside or as part of the state as part of their practice to identify the potential for risk, to stop crime before it occurs. The characterisation of certain groups or individuals as at 'risk' triggers a response from the state that is legitimised by the perceived threat to the individual. This is one reason why guidelines designed to support safeguarding professionals refer to radicalisation as a threat similar to the danger experienced by young people from sexual predators (Counter Terrorism Policing, 2018). The threats of radicalisation and the threat of sexual exploitation are considered as phenomena that can be identified by similar risk factors which can be spotted by professionals.

Referred to as the 'preventative turn' (Peeter: 2015), the 'pre-crime agenda' (McCulloch and Wilson: 2016), the pre-crime space (Zedner: 2007) or the

preventative state (Steiker: 1998) it can also be understood in the broader tendency to assume that it is possible to identify actions and behaviours that lead to abuse and therefore legitimate the state acting before the harm takes place. Steiker identified the notion of the preventive state in 1998 as an emergent phenomenon, where she defined it as a form of state activity that understood the role of the state not as punitive but as a preventer of crime and disorder.

Most notably for the discussion around safeguarding Steiker argued that punishment was neither the most common or the most effective means of crime prevention and that the state could identify and neutralise individuals suspected of being dangerous through restricting their liberty in a number of ways, for example, through expanding the functions of the institutions primarily involved in the criminal justice system or utilising other analogous institutions like the juvenile justice system.

Steiker noted the rise of a preventative state before 9/11, but in the intervening years Dershowitz argues that there has been a dramatic transformation in the political and legal cultures that regulate the relationships between the individual and government leading to a consolidation of a preventative state (Dershowitz: 2009). Policies that place a burden on professionals to identify harm before it occurs have proliferated both in America and the UK and across a range of professions, including, surveillance, law, social work and education, leading to a dramatic transformation in the way the state and professionals understand risk (McCulloch and Wilson 2016).

The 'preventative turn' assumes different forms in law, social work and education, but a common theme is the assumption that harm can be anticipated through the identification of observable risks. As a way of perceiving trends in society and individual patterns of behaviour, risk has become increasingly popular in a number of fields (Beck: 1992,) and it has emerged as a core organisational principal in social work, law and education (Haines and Case: 2008. Donkin 2014). Through the evolution of the so called 'risk-focused prevention paradigm it has become evident that there is a state of being that can be defined as 'at risk' and that professionals, as part of their practice can detect this state (Mythen 2014).

As a category within social work risk has develop from a discourse of intervention that moved from 'child protection' to 'safeguarding'. The change in language reflected a broadening of concern from children who were at significant risk from child abuse, significant harm and danger to those who were 'at risk' (Parton 2004). The emerging prominence of risk also reflects the growth of what France calls the 'prevention science' in education and the criminal justice system where by practitioners believed they could detect problematic issues before they happen (France 2005).

In the field of counter terrorism within education, risk is also a key concept. The House of Commons briefing paper on counter terrorism policy in schools, notes that they will act quickly if a 'school is not keeping a child safe' and that 'they will take firm and swift action' if a pupil is at risk (Long: 2017. Pg. 4). However, as a tool utilised by professionals to predict the outcome of behaviour the notion is contested (Stanley and Guru: 2015). It may lead to reductionist approaches to the assessment of

children and to the interpretation of innocent behaviours as deviant and criminal (Coppock and McGovern 2014).

In legislation and policy, the language in which the relationship between young people and children and extremism is described reinforces the narrative of vulnerability from risk. The annual report of *Strategy for Countering Terrorism* in 2010 noted that the identification of those at risk from being drawn into violent terrorism was in line with 'much broader principles of crime prevention' (H M Government, 2010: 13). In the opening paragraphs to *The Channel Duty Guidance* it states that the vulnerable will be referred to the relevant authorities (HM Government: 2015). Several authors have critiqued the focus on vulnerability in Prevent and associated policy. Heath-Kelly argues that the presentation of Muslim communities as vulnerable contributes to the pathologising of Muslims as simultaneously risky and at risk, a process which legitimates the securitisation of Muslim communities (Heath-Kelly: 2013). This point is developed by Coppock and McGovern when they argue that the focus on the 'vulnerable to extremism discourse' is dangerous precisely because by positioning Muslims as infantile and in need of protection it allows the state to regulate and control them (Coppock and McGovern: 2014).

Like many terms in the Prevent discourse vulnerability as a key notion in education has a history that precedes the War on Terror (Ecclestone and Lewis: 2013). However, in an education context vulnerability is used in two ways, pupils and students are vulnerable and must be protected within a safeguarding context but at the same time their vulnerability to extremism is a threat to the security of others (Ramsey: 2017). Where schools are a pre-crime space, teacher practice is therefore positioned as protective, regulatory *and it is also* the mechanism by which the vulnerable are transitioned into the criminal justice system.

Methods

In this paper I discuss the data from fifty-eight interviews with teachers and educational practitioners with a particular responsibility for RE in primary and secondary schools. Seventeen of the interviews were with two representatives and they lasted between twenty five minutes and an hour. Practitioners with a particular responsibility for RE were chosen because the data was drawn from a larger study on teaching Islam in schools. Two of the interviews took place over the telephone and the others took place in the teachers' schools, either in their classrooms or a designated interview room.

Participants were identified opportunistically and through 'word of mouth' and schools were selected on the basis that RE was taught. Some schools were unwilling to allow interviews because they thought the subject matter was too sensitive and some teachers refused to give interviews on the grounds that they were not specialists and would be an unreliable source of information. Head teachers and heads of academy chains were asked to allow access to schools and to make teachers available for interview.

The interviews were in part, dialogical, conversational and open ended in nature. This approach was selected because of the controversial nature of focus of the interview. Dialogical interviews are often used where participants are likely to feel uncomfortable or unsure about their responses and it allows them a space to developing their thinking as part of the interview process (Knight and Saunders: 1999). The first part of the interviews were semi structured and included topics that explored teacher's responsibilities of the prevention of radicalisation, political and religious extremism and were therefore considered controversial. The second part of the interviews were dialogical. Dialogical interviews regard the interview as a site where meaning is made through the process of talk and reflection, that often takes during the interview (Krauss 2005). It eschews an approach to the interview as a tool, used by the researcher to gather facts (Jarvinen 2000) and regards the interview as a place where interviewees develop meaning. In this sense interviews were embedded in a localist framework that acknowledges the immediate social and cultural boundaries of the interview environment where the interview is a site of meaning making for both the interviewee and the interviewer (Alvesson: 2003).

The key research questions were; how did teachers understand their role in relation to Prevent, what kinds of behaviour and comments from pupils would indicate to them that radicalisation was taking and how would they act if they did believe radicalisation was taking place. Interviews were composed of fixed questions around the ways that schools and teachers understood their duties under the Prevent agenda in relation to their roles as RE teachers/coordinators. The procedures of the school around Prevent and the ways in which extremism and radicalisation were identified as well as the number and nature of any referrals made by the school to Contest was also discussed. The later part of the interview was open ended to accommodate the particular experiences and contexts of the schools and interviews were recorded and transcribed. Themes developed from the literature around Prevent and safeguarding as well as themes from the interviews were used to inform the initial coding of the data. These themes included:

- linking Prevent duties as part of a safeguarding agenda,
- expressions of confidence or concerns about teacher practice in relation to Prevent
- Identifying certain factors or groups as being more or less likely to be associated with Islamic or far right extremism.

The data presented in this article is focused on the experiences and perceptions of teachers' engagement with Prevent and issues relating extremism and radicalisation in their schools.

Additional data was gathered using a content analysis tool of school web pages dealing with safeguarding. The school webpages of every teacher interviewed was interrogated using a deductive approach based on the assumption that safeguarding was an issue commonly addressed by schools on outward facing media. Content analysis was chosen because of its flexibility in establishing links between different sets of data (Elo and Kyngas: 2007). Web pages of all schools were analysed to establish how schools contextualised safeguarding as an issue in relation to other

priorities and provide an accompanying narrative of the relationship between safeguarding, Prevent and radicalisation.

Ethical approval was gained from the researcher's university ethics committee. A key concern was that researchers would put teachers and practitioners in an uncomfortable position if they had concerns with Prevent or their own role in preventing radicalisation. Care was taken to stress that not only would the participants be anonymous but that other measures would be taken to disguise the school and the teacher from identification.

Findings

The data from this research suggests that there are significant differences in the ways that teachers interpret their Prevent duties and in the ways, they identify risk. Although there was a consensus that Prevent and radicalisation were safeguarding issues teachers differed in the ways they associated factors of class, religion and perceived intelligence with the possibility of radicalisation.

The analysis of school policies on webpages showed that every school situated the issue of radicalisation within a safeguarding framework through either including information about radicalisation in the safeguarding policy or referring to radicalisation as a safeguarding issue. Two thirds of all schools included information about radicalisation as part of the safeguarding policy and others had a separate policy that looked specifically at radicalisation and extremism. There was considerable variation in the ways that safeguarding policies address radicalisation. In a quarter of all schools that included radicalisation as part of the safeguarding policy, mention of radicalisation was limited to its inclusion in a list of possible risks, however three quarters of schools outlined the risks in more detail. Where this happened all schools extensively used materials taken from government publications and guidelines from charities like Child line and the NSPPC.

Data from the interviews indicates that while all schools engage with Prevent, schools differ in the degree and nature of their engagement. This is also true for individual teachers. All teachers were aware of Prevent and acknowledged their responsibilities under the duty to identify pupils at risk from radicalisation but there were degrees of knowledge and familiarity with those demands as well as differences with the nature of their engagement.

Common practices and experiences of Prevent

All teachers were aware of their obligation to promote fundamental British values (FBV) as part of Prevent, they all knew that schools were required to identify a named person who had overall responsibility for Prevent in the school and all teachers were aware of the way schools' procedures operated in relation to Prevent. Every teacher had had some form of training or professional development to do with Prevent, the most common of which was on line training (45%), normally WRAP although a minority had participated in sessions run by visiting speakers or members of senior management. Only six teachers expressed concerns that they lacked the knowledge to implement the Prevent Duty.

Teachers positioned their duties under Prevent within a safeguarding context. That is teachers interpreted the potential to be radicalised as a quality that could be compared to other areas covered by safeguarding including, paedophilia, domestic violence and substance abuse. No teacher spontaneously raised objections to the categorisation of radicalisation as a safeguarding issue and when teachers were asked to consider if there were aspects of radicalisation that set it apart from traditional safeguarding issues all insisted that they believed that this was an appropriate way to address it as an issue in school.

Secondary Teacher: We've got very good I mean it's very clear here, in this school that safeguarding is taken very seriously, we would know, you know if we suspected something, I'd tell someone straight away.

Vulnerability, identifying risk and the role of the teacher

As part of the discussion on the way teachers engaged with Prevent teachers were asked about the factors they associated with children and young people at risk from radicalisation. There were notable differences in the factors teachers identified as indicative of radicalisation as well as the significance that individual teachers and schools gave to similar factors.

The majority of all teachers associated vulnerability to certain groups of children. Forty-eight of the fifty-seven interviews included comments related vulnerability to certain characteristics, these included intelligence, religion, class and political factors.

Twelve per cent of teachers in secondary schools stated that they believed that certain types of children were less likely to be at risk because of their intelligence. Teachers reasoned that children in 'higher sets' or 'children who go to grammar schools' are 'more likely to be thoughtful', more questioning and more likely to be critical of stereotypes:

Secondary Teacher:

In this school they're in sets, so the higher sets, usually they are more open minded they are, the lower you go the more narrow minded they become, with little information and you know, very closed.

Secondary Teacher:

It's part of the way we encourage the boys here to think, they have to be able to question everything, we don't spoon feed them, that's not the type of education we're about, but I know it's not like that everywhere, we can do that here because they're very bright, they're really sharp but at some schools, they probably couldn't do that, so they'd have to be more careful

Seventy percent of interviewed teachers stressed that they did not *only* consider children from Muslim families to be at risk but that all children were potentially at risk from radicalisation. All teachers except 4 thought that children from Muslim families and children who supported far right organisations or ideas or from families who had identified themselves as supporting the far right were at greater risk than other children:

Primary Teacher: It's different every time, every case is, you can't predict how these things are going to work out, that's why you need to be so careful, and our community here it's not very diverse so that brings its own issues....

And

Primary Teacher: I worry more about other types of extremism, honestly, it's right here under the surface, you don't have to scratch very far and I'm not just talking about the EDL but other stuff as well.

Primary Teacher:

Most of our parents are not very involved, I mean we do everything we can, we invite them in, you know not just for parents' evenings but for coffee mornings and quiz evenings and loads of things. A large part of how we try and connect is about educating the parents as much as them (pupils). And in this area, it's very white, white, there's some attitudes, you wouldn't believe it, not just Britain First, but some real nasty stuff, and not just about Muslims, so we have to be very careful because the children they just repeat it, they don't know anything else they just hear it and home and think it's OK, and then it's up to us.

As part of the discussion with teachers about who was at risk many teachers suggested that pupils were at risk not merely from other types of extremism but of

There was a clear difference in the way teachers positioned parents in relation to risk that was dependent on whether teachers located the risk for children from extremism associated with Islam or far right extremism. Teachers who feared that children were at risk from far-right extremism all identified parents and the local community and on-line radicalisation as significant risks. Only two of the fifty-nine teachers that expressed a fear that pupils were at risk from radicalisation associated with Islam mentioned the role of parents and all mentioned online sources or the media.

There appeared to be a difference between the way some secondary RE teachers identified risk from other teachers. Of the twenty-seven teachers that were interviewed in secondary schools or six form colleges twenty-three identified themselves as specialists, in some cases this meant that they had degrees in subjects that are related to RE; theology, Religious Studies, philosophy etc., others who had specialised in RE during their teacher training and those who had

developed a specialism through professional development in schools. These teachers were far more likely to believe that they possessed the knowledge and skills to be able to determine whether the risk of radicalisation was real or the result of adolescent bravado:

Secondary Teacher:

Sometimes when a student says something that rings alarm bells the teacher will let their line manager know and then usually it comes to me, you know, and often I know the kid, and I'll say 'look, I know your mum, what would she say if she knew you were, you know, and then they hang their head and they're a bit embarrassed

In contrast twenty five of the thirty one primary teachers and those secondary teachers who did not consider themselves specialists were more likely to indicate that they would be more likely to automatically report any incident to the safeguarding officer or their line manager.

Discussion

This study explored the way teachers with a responsibility for RE understand their practice in relation to Prevent. The findings in this research confirm some of the findings from the largest study on Prevent and Schools so far, *What the Prevent Duty means for schools and colleges in England*, (Busher *et al* 2017). Teachers in both studies situated concerns about extremism and radicalisation within a safeguarding context. This means that for most teachers there was a sense that the Prevent Duty did not represent a significant departure from previous professional safeguarding responsibilities. This familiarity was reflected in the confidence that most teachers felt in relation to their practice in relation to Prevent and confirms the findings of other studies (Bryan: 2017).

This study was smaller and was focused only on teachers, however, an analysis of the research using the notion of the school as a pre-crime geography both builds upon and extends the findings of Busher *et al.* in significant ways. These are; that although there is a consensus that children who are risk and therefore vulnerable should fall under the remit of a safeguarding agenda the way teachers understand and define vulnerability varies between schools. Secondly, it appeared that the teachers in this study believed that a range of ideologies beyond those traditionally defined as extreme put vulnerable children at risk, these ideologies included racism and 'offensive ideas'.

Notions of the preventative state are usually intertwined and informed by complimentary ideas of the legitimacy of wider intervention in the lives of the vulnerable, so that the role of the state is at the same time broader, more interventive and more regulatory (Parton 2008). In this sense safeguarding is both a mechanism of and a rationale for the preventative state. It's wide and vague remit, its caution that harm may happen to anyone at any time (Coppard 2008) expands the area in which a professional has a duty to intervene from the immediate context

of the child to a 'range of community, institutional and structural factors' that may impact on a child's welfare (Parton 2014:97, McKendrick and Finch 2017) and it provides the means by which that intervention may take place. Even though 'risk' as a tool utilised by professionals to predict the outcome of behaviour is contested (Stanley and Guru: 2015) practitioners, are often empowered with the authority to detect and decide who is at risk, who is vulnerable and the extent of the intervention.

Teachers identified and interpreted risk factors differently, the sorts of children and families they thought were vulnerable were shaped by a range of factors including, the subject specialism of the teacher, teacher perception of the academic abilities of pupils and assumptions about the class and political character of pupils' families. Teachers agreed that all pupils are at risk but depending on the school and the pupils teachers believed some are at greater risk than others. In her discussion of risk in relation to counter terrorism Donkin notes that notions of risk are always contextualised by broader political narratives (Donkin 2014). That is, the impossibility of creating an objective definition of risk means that interpretation, local factors and dominant discourses will always shape teacher practice in relation to risk and prevention (France 2005). The subjective nature of risk means that it is a fallible indicator of future harm (Curtis 2016) but also that in the case of the research discussed here it may also facilitate teacher bias. The relationship between teachers' views on the class, ethnicity, gender or religion of pupils and their treatment of those pupils is well documented (Johnson: 2002, Solomona et al: 2005), our research suggests that teacher engagement with safeguarding may be as misinformed. Teachers' assumptions about the likelihood of pupils who belong to certain groups, the academically able, Muslim, white working class etc. being more or less at risk means that safeguarding may be a conduit of teacher misconceptions and prejudice.

In this study teacher practice could be characterised as a form of 'panoptic sort' whereby many teachers categorize and classify children on the basis of their beliefs (Gandy 1993). Gandy argued that modern societies create technologies that not only monitor and observe behaviour but that there was a tendency for this observation to discriminate and sort. Lyon notes that the impetus towards sorting is legitimised by the belief that risk is endemic but that this also raises important questions not only about privacy but about relation to social justice (Lyon 2003). The issue of the sorting of children based on their beliefs (or the beliefs of their parents) also highlights questions about the status of beliefs per se in relation to Prevent and teacher practice. In his discussion of the nature of safe spaces in education Ramsay observes that Prevent has legitimacy not merely because it is presented as a counter terrorist initiative but in part because it is part of a wider tendency in society to survey and regulate speech (Ramsay 2017). There is a growing literature focused on the threats posed to free speech by Prevent but as yet there is very little on the way teachers may or may not be complicit in this process.

Many critics note that the Prevent Duty effectively criminalises all Muslims as part of a suspect community (Anwan: 2012, Mckendrick and Finch 2017). However, the inherent logic of safeguarding facilitates even greater levels of intervention by teachers in the lives of all pupils through privileging the concept of vulnerability. In interviews teachers argued that the duty to safeguard meant that they had a

responsibility to safeguard all pupils. Many teachers commented that although they believed that Prevent had been specifically introduced to target Muslim pupils they believed that many other groups were equally as vulnerable to risk. In particular teachers identified the children of white working-class families that they believed or suspected of sympathising with extreme right-wing politics as being as vulnerable as Muslim children. In this way the practice of safeguarding theoretically widens the notion of vulnerability 'almost infinitely' (Ecclestone 2017. 51) so that teachers understand that not only are all children potentially at risk but they may then intervene in the lives of all students who they suspect of being at risk. Others have shown how Prevent and the radicalisation discourse is 'a tool of power exercised by the state' to target Muslim communities (Githens-Mazer and Lambert, 2010, 901) but in the context of the pre-crime school it may be a tool used by teachers as part of their professional practice to target all those they think may be at risk.

Conclusion

The analysis of teacher practice as an aspect of a pre-crime space offers new insights into the way teachers engage with counter terrorism initiatives. As pre-crime spaces, schools transform teacher work through the narratives of safeguarding, vulnerability and risk so that surveillance is normalised as an ordinary part of practice (Farrell 2016, Taylor 2013). A very few teachers did question their new responsibilities under the Prevent Duty but their voices were marginal in the context of the louder voices of safeguarding and the need to protect the vulnerable. Whereas previous studies have noted the acquiescence of teachers with Prevent, the data in this study suggests that teacher engagement with the notions of vulnerability and risk is not only compliant but is leading to ever broader areas of suspicion where teachers believe they have the authority to intervene.

The tendency towards compliance raises significant questions about the nature of teacher practice in relation to safeguarding. Other studies have posed the question of whether Prevent closes down debate in the classroom or whether there is a chilling effect where teachers are unable to create spaces for critical inquiry in the classroom (Ramsay 2017). The pre-crime assumptions that underpin safeguarding mean that it is an entirely normative process built on the belief that risks are real and it is the duty of professionals to prevent them (Parton, 2006). This means that any teacher who wishes to challenge either their role as actors in the counter terrorism strategy or who wish to promote free speech in the classroom are in 'a precarious position in the current climate' (O'Donnell, 67, 2015). As yet there is little debate and no research on whether teachers and schools are best placed to detect radicalisation and it would be a brave teacher that sought to raise critical questions about their practice in relation to these processes.

In the film of *The Minority Report*, starring Tom Cruise the writers changed the ending from Philip K Dick's original story. In the original, the protagonist believes that the sacrifices of personal freedom demanded by the pre-crime division are worth the reduction in civil liberties. In the film the protagonist proves that the future can be changed when individuals change the way they act and the pre-crime unit is shut down and all the prisoners are unconditionally pardoned and released. If schools

are pre crime spaces they preclude the opportunity for change and transformation because they urge teachers to consider pupils with suspicion and doubt before any wrong has happened. Teacher practice then becomes a vehicle not for open mindedness and hope for their pupils but for surveillance and suspicion.

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