

A SUBMISSION

Out of School Education Settings Consultation

A submission to the Department for Education
from the Maranatha Community

1. We recognise that grooming and radicalisation of young people is an urgent problem which the government, understandably, seeks to address.
2. The proposed strategy and its basis are fundamentally misconceived and will cause immeasurable harm to our British way of life, whilst failing to tackle the problem.
3. The government's Counter-Extremism Strategy states:
"Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs".
4. Our shared British values are founded upon Judaeo-Christian belief, with the concept of individual liberty embracing freedom of speech, debate, conscience and religion.
5. Those who adhere to orthodox Christian teaching, for example on issues such as marriage, abortion and homosexual practice, are already being punished for holding beliefs which fall within the government's vague definition of extremism. The proposed strategy undoubtedly renders punishable the teaching of Christianity, thereby breaching the very fundamental British values which such actions purport to uphold.
6. All Christian teaching is founded on love, compassion, profound respect for every person and the sacrifice of self-interest for the common good.
7. The proposed strategy is far too wide-ranging, vague, bureaucratic and expensive, and will significantly curtail out-of-school activities that foster and encourage the very values which are the hallmark of British life and culture.
8. Religions are not all equal. Only a value system founded on Judaeo-Christian principles is capable of accommodating people of all beliefs and none, as evidenced by the peaceful pluralism unique to Britain and other Judaeo-Christian countries. One cannot retain the fruits of its teaching without maintenance of the roots.
9. The secularism which informs the proposed strategy is not neutral with regard to faith. On the contrary. It increasingly discriminates against people and communities of faith, whilst undermining British values and culture in ways which serve to *increase* radicalisation.
10. We strongly urge the government to take more time to consider, define and implement effective strategies aimed only at activities where there are, or have been, demonstrable and specific grounds for concern.

11th January 2016

The Maranatha Community is an international movement of thousands of Christians who are active in all the main denominations throughout the United Kingdom and abroad. It is committed to work for peace, justice and reconciliation and works for healing, unity and renewal for individuals, families, communities and nations.

The Maranatha Community
102 Irlam Road, Flixton, Manchester M41 6JT
Tel: 0161 748 4858 Fax: 0161 747 5379
www.maranathacommunity.org.uk email: info@marantahacommunity.org.uk