



OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

DIGNATE 2



DIGNATE 2

CTPHQ Interventions Org Learning Review – Axel RUDAKUBANA

Protective Marking	OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE
Title	Dignate 2 Review D2.090.25 Axel RUDAKUBANA
Publication Scheme Y/N	No
Summary / Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate critical data from this case and review against other Dignate2 cohorts to seek organisational learning opportunities by capturing high-level themes, trends and good practice. • Develop a chronology of touchpoints this subject has had with police from the first Prevent engagement until Dignate2 trigger incident. • Review these records in line with national policy and guidance. • Identification of local or regional learning or good practice. • Identification of national learning or good practice. • The focus of this review is to provide positive, constructive recommendations to prevent similar occurrences happening again. Not to point fingers or lay blame - even when mistakes have been made.
Region	North West
RPC	David Wells
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1) Executive Summary

- Between 2019 and 2021 Axel RUDAKUBANA (AMR) was referred to Prevent three times over concerns around his behaviour and comments in school as well as online activity. Prior to the first referral he had admitted to Child Line that he was taking a knife to school due to being bullied. He was then subsequently excluded from his school for admitting to taking a knife to school to 'stab someone'. Then around the time of the first referral he was arrested for a s.47 assault and possession of a bladed weapon within school grounds after going to his old school with a knife and hockey stick to assault a pupil.
- The first referral was received from AMR's new school in December 2019 after series of incidents of concerning behaviour in lessons which included him searching for school shootings in the US. It took 11 days to be registered. The case was progressed to PLP and a contact visit took place before it was closed with no CT/DE concerns.
- The second referral in February 2021 was again from AMR's school and related to an Instagram account on which he had made posts and reposted material about Colonel Gaddafi. This case was closed in Initial Assessment after 7 days with no concerns identified.
- The third and final referral at the end of April 2021 was also from his school when AMR was observed making terrorist related internet searches including searching for the London Bridge attack. This referral was open for 10 days before being closed in initial assessment with no CT concerns.
- These cases took place at a time when Dovetail was in place in the region, this may have contributed to some of the decision making and this is explored further in the learning observations at the end of the report. Since its inception in 2012 Channel has been managed and led by Counter Terrorism Police, typically Prevent police officers. However, in 2016 a new approach (known as Dovetail) was trialled to move 'ownership' of Channel into local authorities. The new local-authority-led Channel approach did not change the process of Channel referrals or delivery but changed where some of the functions of the process and delivery were managed. The trial took place in nine local authorities and ceased in 2024. It is apparent from the facts in these cases that there was enough to get any of the three referrals through PGA into Dovetail information gathering. From there, the LA coordinator would have gathered the VAF and multi-agency information. However each time the case was entirely police led, seemingly with a reluctance to share the risk / decision making with the Dovetail lead. It has been observed in some Dovetail sites, CTCOs making a decision at PGA based on the 36 threshold, rather than that of *suspect*, therefore more cases being closed at PGA than in other regions, which didn't have Dovetail in place.

2) Subject Background

AMR was born in Cardiff, Wales, four years after his parents moved to Britain from Rwanda. At the time of the referrals he was a schoolboy living at home with his parents and older brother who has [DPA]

Prior to being known to prevent, throughout the time of the Prevent referrals and beyond, AMR was involved with police and several safeguarding services including social care, mental health services, and was receiving support for educational needs.

It was noted that AMR had undiagnosed ASD and potentially other mental health issues.

3) Timeline

April 2019 – AMR contacted Child Line to report that he was being bullied at school by a named person and admitted taking a knife to school. This report was subsequently passed on to local police via the NCA and officers visited AMR at his home address.

Reviewer Comment – *Details of this visit were not available to the review team. Dependent on what was discussed and what AMR said to police this could have been an opportunity for local police to have made a Prevent referral.*

October 2019 – AMR was expelled from the Range High School in Sefton after taking in a knife to injure a fellow student. On the Pupil Exclusion Notification, it stated that AMR admitted to bringing in a knife to the School on 10 occasions to “stab someone”. CAMHS referral made by school.

Reviewer Comment - *Prevent and/or police were not informed of this at the time.*

17/10/2019 – AMR admitted to Acorns School. Staff note and document several instances of concerning behaviour in the following weeks:

15/11/2019 - During a lesson a teacher found AMR searching school shootings in America. When he was told to stop and get on with his work he tried to engage in a conversation about the subject. Action as documented by the school: “SE telephoned dad and informed him of incident. SE asked dad to reinforce that this was not an appropriate use of the internet during school. SE asked dad for update regarding CAMHs and was told that he was waiting for school to refer, as this had been agreed at admissions. SE informed JH. Dad returned call a few minutes later, informing SE that AMR said he had only copied behaviour of another student, and that he had clicked on a hyperlink to a news story. M was present during the telephone conversation and said that she would need a few days to get a copy of AMR’s browser history. SE then informed dad that she would get back to him once this information was available. However there is also a note on this entry stating the school can no longer log student web history. The contradiction is not explored.

29/11/2019 - At the start of an art lesson AMR refused to sit down and opted for walking up and down near his seat punching his hand hard. He was told to stop, as he would hurt himself. He then sat down and started to work with SM very reluctantly. SM was trying to give him ideas how to promote his business and one suggestion was to tell people that his business was new to the area. He insisted that this would not be good because people would think he would kill them, as they did not know him. He said that people do not trust others they do not know in case they get murdered. He was regularly out of his seat and then he walked to the highest part of the ceiling, jumped up and punched a laminate hanging from it very hard”

03/12/2019 – During an art lesson, working with oil pastels colouring in Call of Duty images AMR commented saying “Why can we have these with guns but can’t look at guns on the Internet” and then said “can we have a picture of a severed head then”, the teacher replied, this is not appropriate and changed the subject.

03/12/2019 - “In the workshop AMR was discussing different YouTubers and YouTube videos. I could not concentrate on exactly what he was talking about or who but I think he was discussing with another pupil videos of people hurting themselves. He also made a comment about if a drill bit broke it could fly off and kill someone, he was quite graphic.”

4/12/2019 - During PSHE, AMR used a swear word to comment on an image of Nicola Sturgeon on the worksheet students were completing. There were other Political Party leaders on the sheet and AMR said, ‘He looks like a retard,’ in regards to these. SE explained that this was inappropriate and considered ‘politically incorrect’; SE also asked AMR not to use this

word again. He responded by stating that he had heard it used before. SE attempted to explain how the meaning of words changes over time, but AMR was not listening and was talking over SE. At the end of the lesson, SE asked SM to log two instances of inappropriate language by AMR, who challenged this as 'I've not used swear words.' SE explained that the log kept by SM was about inappropriate language not just taboo language, and that using the word 'retard' as an adjective describe someone was wrong and hurtful.

04/12/2019 – AMR stated his Keyworker SM: 'is a sexist, she made a joke about men at work'. AMR then said 'she is a homophobic as she was drinking out of a 'Mrs' cup and shouted when we asked was she a lesbian'. AMR then said 'she is a racist as well she said Coon earlier. She actually said to me AMR you are a coon'. The Head Teacher informed AMR's father and an emergency review was arranged for the next day, which included representation from Early Help and a request was made for the Community Safety Team to attend.

Reviewer Comment – *The school took three weeks to make the first Prevent referral. The first incident on the 15/11 by itself would have justified a Prevent referral.*

05/12/2019 - First Prevent Referral – PCM-31490 (open for 34 days). **Ideology:** School Massacre Ideology. **Referral originator:** School. **Reason for Referral:** Above concerns over AMR's behaviour in school and comments made on school massacres, shootings and guns.

05/12/2019 – Acorn School engaged with the local MASH team regarding a referral to be made. Discussion between school and MASH police sergeant were documented including a planned strategy meeting. The sergeant comments "I have been advised not to attend the meeting as this info on the face of it is of a higher risk than community safety to deal with".

11/12/2019 - AMR arrested for an s.47 assault and possession of a bladed weapon within school grounds after going to his old school with a knife and hockey stick to assault a pupil. AMR allegedly is reported to have told an officer on scene that he had taken the hockey stick to hit the victims with, that he was going to use the knife to finish them off and that he was not bothered about going to prison. Subsequently bailed. Devices were seized for examination from AMR's home address and included portable hard drives, a laptop computer, a desktop computer, an USB and two mobile phones. They were later examined for evidence (bar an iPhone which couldn't be decrypted) relating to the assault investigation only but none was found and they were returned, at the time of this review the downloads are no longer available.

Reviewer comment – *Devices seized as part of the s47 assault investigation were examined by the investigating force but the result was not requested or documented within PCMT. Best practice would have been to liaise with local police to gain a copy of the download to assess against CT relevant criteria.*

Reviewer comment – *The assault shows a potential escalation in his behaviour risk levels. It is unclear if this was noted by the FIMU, and what (if at all) re-assessment took place as a result of this new incident. The full FIMU assessment was not recorded on the PCMT as outlined in the CTCO guide and NSIM annex B.*

16/12/2019 - Prevent referral 31490 registered on PCM.

Reviewer Comment - *The case took 11 days from the time the Prevent referral was completed by the school up until it was placed onto the PCMT and de-confliction took place. During which time a significant incident occurred.*

17/12/2019 - FIMU research checks conducted for AMR, his mother, father and older sibling with no PNC traces for the family; DPA and an incident of note is identified which is the phone call AMR made to NCA regarding being bullied.

18/12/2019 – The CTCO attended the strategy meeting at the Youth Zone with representatives from Children's Social Care, Mental Health, and Investigating officer from Merseyside, Police Early Action, Education, and Prevent. The following updates are recorded:

- Update from Merseyside Investigating officer: AMR was bailed from Police custody on 11/12/19 due to the late hour and a request to return on the 12/12/19, the following day, which he did with his mother acting as appropriate adult. Checks conducted with Lancashire EDT who confirms there are no concerns with AMR returning to the family home on release. There is also a suggestion the attack at the school was planned due to a booked taxi. In interview AMR provided a prepared statement admitting the assault, admitting possession of the hockey stick and knife but stated he had no intention of using the knife or kill the alleged target of the attack and denies researching inappropriate material at the school on the internet

- All devices have been seized from his house and will be examined. Of note the victim's Mother had stated that the subject had a list of 3 Targets and the subject had also said to a PC form Merseyside that he had taken the hockey stick to hit the victim with and that he was going to use the knife to finish him off and that he was not bothered about the prison sentence.
- Update from MH team whilst in Custody: It is believed that the subject has ASD; he doesn't make eye contact and shows no emotion, he doesn't understand the consequences of going to prison. Forensic CAMHS appointment has been made for the 21/01/19 and the subject is on a waiting list for an ASD assessment
- Update from Acorn School: Acorns school will not accept the subject back and mental health had advised that the subject does not return back to a school setting until his mental health has been assessed.
- Early Help Update: The subject was visited at home; parents do not challenge the subject's behaviour and state that he is a good boy. The subject has ASD traits, he struggles with eye contact and has very rigid thinking, and he is not able to show emotion and has no remorse or empathy. They stated that the subject is at risk of further criminality, we don't understand what the trigger for his behaviour is or how to prevent this. The subject has said that he hates his brother who is in a wheelchair [DPA] and the subject states that he hates his brother, as he is not really [DPA]

The following actions are documented:

- The Mental Health team to carry out an urgent assessment and liaise with the investigation officer
- CSC visit the subject at least once a week and link in with Parenting 2000 and invite them to the next meeting.
- Prevent to visit the subject next week

20/12/2019 – PGA/DIF. Status changed from Registered to Initial Assessment.

20/12/2019 - Status changed from Initial Assessment to Police Led. It is noted that a prevent visit is to determine the appropriate course of action when further information is obtained.

23/12/2019 – PGA.

- Complex Needs: The subject has undiagnosed ASD and mental health issues and may also have special educational needs he displays ASD traits and the only emotions he is able to express are sad or angry, he has no understanding of remorse or consequences for his actions. The subject has expressed that that he thinks that there is something wrong with him he is unable to express himself emotionally or make eye contact. The subject feels resentment towards his brother [DPA] the subject does not believe that he is really [DPA] Parents don't challenge the subject's behaviour and don't appear to be able to cope.
- The subject has wanted to stab a particular individual as he stated that he had previously been bullied by him, however there is no evidence of this and it is possible that he is using this as an excuse to justify his attack. It is believed that the subject has a list of 3 targets 2 named individuals and one unknown female this has not been corroborated at this stage. The subject has been using aggressive behaviour and has shown hatred towards his brother and the male he wanted to assault. He has stated that the terrorist attack on the MEN was a good thing.
- The subject had been researching school shootings on the schools IT systems, all of his devices were seized from the home address upon his arrest and will be examined. There is no further information in relation to his online access at this stage. The school are making enquiries into his internet search history whilst at school; police are examining the subject's devices. Prevent to make further enquires during their visit.
- Recommended Route: Police Led
- Prevent are to visit the subject to determine if the case will be suitable for a referral to Dovetail. Officers to determine if there is any CT/DE ideology and risk assess any vulnerabilities and safeguarding and put the appropriate support in place.
- Supervisor Review: I agree with the comments above. At this time, there are a number of unknowns. The subject needs to be spoken to in order to clarify his ideology and address the potential risk and threat that he may pose. There are also safeguarding and vulnerabilities to be addressed in particular his ongoing criminal investigation and his vulnerability to radicalisation. Therefore, I agree that it is appropriate and proportionate to record this PCMP as Police Led at this time to address these points. Once the information has been obtained if appropriate Channel will be considered.

03/01/2020 - Prevent officers visited AMR at his home address with his father present. The following summary was documented on PCM:

'The subject stated that he felt the school had taken things out of context in relation to his behaviour and online activity. When he was asked about researching the internet about school shootings, he stated that he been interested in a news article about this, which he had looked at, he, told officers that he had not actively searched for this.

He stated that he had looked at some "num chucks" on the school internet but he did this to research for a lesson where they were building things. The subject said that he had explained the reasons why he had looked at these things on the internet to the teachers and that they still wrote it down anyway, he said that he felt they were always writing things down about him to get him into trouble.

The subject said that he hated it at school and that he did not like any of the teachers and he felt as though they were picking on him.

When the subject was asked about the recent incident he had been arrested for he said he had done this because he was being bullied and that he had told the teachers but they hadn't done anything about it, he felt that he was being bullied as the person bullying him was jealous because everyone at his previous school liked him. He said that he had previously taken knives into school as he was being bullied; he stated that he would not carry knives anymore as he understands this is wrong.

The subject showed no remorse about what he had done and did not seem to understand the consequences of his actions.

The subject told officers he didn't like his brother as he was pretending that he couldn't walk to get attention, he said that he was angry that he had to move schools because of his brother and he lost all of his friends because of him. The subject's older brother is in a wheelchair [DPA]

Throughout the conversation the subject displayed traits of Autism as he was not able to make eye contact and was continuously fidgeting and struggled to understand his emotions and was unable to empathise with the victim he recently assaulted.

The subject did not display any extremist views or CT/DE ideology during the conversation and has no interest in politics or religion. He has no grievances against any specific groups, the recent assault was towards a pupil that has been bullying him.

He does not currently have access to the internet as all his devices have been seized by the police. He would usually play games like Fortnite but is unable to do so until he gets his devices back from the police. The subject is vulnerable as he possibly has autism which is undiagnosed at this stage. There have been changes within the family; [DPA] [DPA] he is now in a wheel chair which has meant the subject has had to move home and school. The subject has no friends and is isolated he is not in school as they will not allow him to return until a risk assessment is put into place. He has been a victim of bullying and requires a diagnosis in relation to his Autism so that the right support can be put into place.

The CTCO documented the following assessment: 'I do not feel that there are any CT/DE concerns at this stage, however the subject is extremely vulnerable and needs support from other agencies that are already in place, I have advised agencies to refer to prevent should they have any more concerns in the future and also if any relevant information is found on his internet history from the school or from his devices. This information will be submitted to FIMU for assessment'.

06/01/2020 – The CTCO attended a strategy meeting in relation AMR and recorded the following update:

'The subject had his first assessment with CAMHS who have stated that there are no mental health concerns identified but that Autism is apparent and a diagnosis is required urgently. The subject will also attend a Forensic CAMHS appointment on the 21/01/20. The subject is not able to return to school at this stage and alternative education/provision will be considered. A continuous assessment will be carried out by social services, and a request for a statutory SEN assessment will be made by the parents with the assistance of supporting agencies'.

08/01/2020 – Update recorded on PCM – 'FIMU have assessed that the case can now be closed – prevent there are no CT/DE concerns present at this stage; the relevant agencies are supporting the subject, all agencies aware that if any new concerns are identified they can refer to prevent'.

Reviewer Comment: *The FIMU appear to be making a Prevent assessment.*

15/01/2020 - Status changed from Police Led to Pending Closure.

31/01/2020 - The status changed from Pending Closure to Closed. Supervisor entry states: 'As detailed in the PCM the concerns relayed to Prevent have been explored and do not appear to be linked to an Ideology or a vulnerability to radicalisation. There are vulnerabilities and needs, which are being met by mainstream safeguarding, and this case can be closed to Prevent'. **Closure Outcome:** Police Led - Non-CT Concern Referred On. **Onward Referral:** Social Services

03/08/2020 - 6 month review conducted, no further concerns reported and no updates on connect, no trace on PNC.

15/01/2021 - 12 month review conducted, no updates on connect or PNC.

01/02/2021 – **Second Prevent Referral** – PCM-37556 - (open for 7 days). By this point AMR is back at Acorn School.

Ideology: Vulnerability Present – No ideology. **Referral Originator:** School (DSL) **Reason For Referral:** AMR was still be in contact with pupils from his previous school (The Range), one of whom brought a matter to their attention whereby they had seen posts on AMR's Instagram account relating to Colonel Gaddafi. The school stated 'Although there is nothing strikingly dangerous in this message, it contains some details regarding Colonel Gaddafi, which might raise some potential radicalisation concerns, particularly if Axel has been posting, or discussing other similar material'.

08/02/2021 - Referral registered on PCM.

09/02/2021 –Status changed from Registered to Initial Assessment. The CTOC noted 'The subject has previously been referred to prevent and was closed as non-CT/DE. The new intelligence does not meet the thresholds for adoption at Chanel and does not suggest he holds any extremist ideology. This case is suitable for closure'.

Reviewer Comment –. *This is not the stage at which an assessment for Chanel is made, to progress to Information gathering there only needs to be a suspicion the subject is vulnerable to be drawn into terrorism. This is now a repeat referral which raises the risk.*

15/02/2021 - Status changed from Initial Assessment to Pending Closure – 'This has been assessed as non-CT/DE by FIMU the school will continue to support the subject and aware to re refer in the future if relevant'.

PGA:

- The facts of the current and previous referral have been documented stating that it has been assessed by FIMU as not being new intelligence it does not suggest he holds any extremist ideology.
- **FIMU assessment as follows:** Subject has been previously referred to Prevent. The outcome of that referral (for which the intelligence was far more concerning) was that he did not have any CT/DE ideology or vulnerable to radicalisation. I have reviewed this new referral, which refers to 2 posts he has made on his Instagram page which relate to Gaddafi and discusses whether he was that bad. I have searched for and unable to find any Instagram page associated to him. Likewise, I have found no Social Media accounts in his name. The Instagram posts he has made are screenshots from a website, www.newsshopper.co.uk/youngreporter/9394709.was-gaddafi-really-that-bad and is from November 2011. It does not appear that the subject was the author of this report. As such I do not believe this new intelligence is worthy of a new Prevent referral as I do not assess it would meet the thresholds for adoption at Chanel and the content does not suggest he holds any extremist ideology but rather an opposing opinion on Gaddafi's Libyan regime, questioning the US and EU motivation for removing him. This referral does not highlight any new concerns and can be closed to prevent, school are aware to re refer if there are any concerns in the future.
- **Supervisor Review:** I have reviewed this case and note there is a lack of information in all areas. I am satisfied that the OIC has made sufficient enquiries with the original referrer and linked in with FIMU. The concerns in this case were around posts online which were not deemed CT/DE relevant. There does not appear to be any further safeguarding that is currently required. I am unable to see any previous referral into Prevent on the PCMT, although as that has been closed and this case does not contain any CT/DE concerns then I am satisfied this can be closed immediately.

Reviewer comment: *The supervisor acknowledges repeat referral but states that they can't see the previous one, so without having access to this information they still close the case. There is a lack of documented decision making and we do not know what additional checks have been conducted and what enquiries have been made with the initial referrer. It is unclear if a full i3 check was conducted which would be beneficial based on the referral making reference to online material.*

Reviewed comment: *It appears as though the FIMU assessment heavily influences the prevent assessment by the CTCO and supervisor. CTCO guide stipulates the importance of an independent assessment to take place to avoid this.*

17/02/2021 - The status has changed from Pending Closure to Closed, supervisor rationale recorded as follows: 'I have reviewed this case and note there is a lack of information in all areas. I am satisfied that the OIC has made sufficient enquiries with the original referrer and linked in with FIMU. The concerns in this case were around posts online which were not deemed CT/DE relevant. There does not appear to be any further safeguarding that is currently required. I am unable to see any previous referral into Prevent on the PCMT, although as that has been closed and this case does not contain any CT/DE concerns then I am satisfied this can be closed immediately'. **Closure Outcome:** Initial Assessment - No Concerns Identified. **Suggested Onward Referral:** School

23/08/2021 - Note: 6 month review conducted - No new reporting. No new updates.

26/04/2021 - Third Prevent Referral – PCM-38648 (open for 10 days).

Ideology: Vulnerability Present – No ideology. **Referral Originator:** School. **Reason For Referral:** AMR was using at his school to look at his English work (BBC bitesize). As a teacher came closer to the screen she noticed 2 web pages were open with the words "London Bridge". AMR found to be researching bombs in London and was also expressing an interest in the history of the IRA and the Israel/Palestine conflict.

26/04/2021 – FIMU Assessment – 'The subject is a current pupil at the Acorn School in ORMSKIRK, and prior to this he was excluded from The Range in Merseyside for bringing a knife into school and speaking about school massacre/shooting. It transpires that Axel had phoned child line to report bullying prior to bringing a knife into school. This was managed under PCM31490 and closed in 2020 as no CT DE after a visit by Prevent officers, who were satisfied that his vulnerabilities lied elsewhere in a potential ASD diagnosis.

A further concern was highlighted in Feb 2021 after he was reported to still be in contact via Instagram with pupils at his old school and that pictures of Colonel GADDAFI has been shared this was briefly managed under PCM37556 and written off once again as no CTDE.

This new reporting comes once again from Acorn school whereby the concern highlighted comes from Axel viewing news documents around the London Bridge attacks, he also spoke with his teacher about Israel and Palestine and had a conversation around MI5 and the IRA.

Axel was assessed back in 2019 under IHM and was assessed as not meeting the threshold for an investigation under the CT banner.

There was obviously a local authority MASH led intervention around him bringing the knife into school which led to him being excluded and he now attends ACORN school in Ormskirk.

The ongoing advice to staff has always been to refer should they feel that he shows any vulnerabilities going forward. This can sometimes lead to knee jerk referral's this one being highlighted in case.

I do not assess the comments made by the subject in this instance to evidence he displays extremist views, in fact he has commented that there are always two sides to a story, he obviously has an interest in current affairs but this behaviour can also be attributed to his ASD diagnosis.

He is currently waiting for an EHCP and is awaiting a specialist educational placement which I believe will help and support Axel through his ongoing education.

I think the referral has been done with the best intentions which comes as a result from the initial issues when at The Range.

As per the previous PCM (Colonel Gaddafi) I do not feel this new reporting holds any CT DE vulnerability and only highlights and interest in world news and current affairs which is a trait of ASD. Subjects' educational needs are being met at Acorn and it is clear that the teachers are aware of reporting any future concerns'.

Reviewer comment: *No comprehensive open source takes place and the risk around repeat referrals does not appear to have been considered. Again the FIMU appears to be making a Prevent decision. It is unclear how the assessment of AMR holding an interest in current affairs was reached, given the contact visit concluded that AMR did **not** have an interest in politics or religion.*

07/05/2021 - PGA Completed and status changed from Initial Assessment to Pending Closure noting there are no CT/DE concerns and that AMR is currently waiting for an EHCP and a specialist educational placement.

10/05/2021 - Status changed from Pending Closure to Closed with the following rationale: recorded by the supervisor 'I have reviewed this case and agree with the assessment provided by the CTCO. The subject displays an interest in a recent London bomb and researched news articles as a result. Following a conversation with teaching staff there is context provided which shows an interest in history and current affairs. Conversation included knowledge of troubles in Israel/Palestine, IRA/ London attacks. There are no extreme views or concerns of a CT/DE rhetoric. The subject displays critical thinking skills demonstrating he has considered different viewpoints and information. I note the previous concerns raised which have been sufficiently addressed and does not change the outcome of this assessment. Subject appears to have sufficient support in place, and I do not feel the subject is at risk of radicalisation currently from the information provided. As such I agree this case should close immediately. Agencies already involved can raise any issues should they arise. Referrer has been contacted and offered advice and support and is aware of reporting any future concerns. Felt by CTCO that any comments made were not attributable to extremist views and subject has interest in current affairs and this may be linked to an ASD diagnosis. At time of closure subject was awaiting an Educational Health Care Plan via local authority social care and specialist education placement to meet his needs. Referral assessed to not show any CT/DE vulnerability and highlights interest in world affairs. No home visit or further contact with subject". **Closure Outcome:** Initial Assessment - Non-CT Concern Referred On. **Suggested Onward Referral:** School

Reviewer comment: *The CTCO and supervisor appear to be placing a large degree of weight to their assessment on a contact visit which took place a year prior.*

29/07/2024 - Trigger Offence takes place.

4) Learning Observations and Themes

1. **Learning Observation.** Possible opportunities to refer to Prevent earlier.
 - When local police visited AMR following on from the phone call to Child Line, depending on what was discussed and how AMR reacted, this could have been a missed opportunity to refer in to Prevent. Details of this interaction were not available for this review.
 - The school took three weeks to make the first Prevent referral from the first recorded classroom incident on the 15/11/2019, whereby AMR was searching for school shootings, this by itself could have justified a Prevent referral.
 - The Range School did not inform Police and / or Prevent that AMR had been habitually carrying knives to school. Ideally this could have justified a Prevent referral or at the least a report to local police which may have resulted in an earlier intervention.

2. **Learning Observation.** When AMR was arrested at his old school for the assault, possession of a knife and a hockey stick, it was five days after the first referral was submitted, but before this referral was registered and assessed. When the FIMU did conduct their assessment, it is stated that AMR was 'no trace' PNC, so the assault was not taken in to account. Given the fact that the FIMU do not appear to have considered it, the CTCO does not resubmit this intelligence for reassessment of the risk despite noting it on the PCMT. There also appears to have been a missed opportunity for an assessment of cumulative risk of a multiple referral as the local police did not submit a further Prevent referral for the arrest.

Relevant policy current at the time is included below:

NSIM – Annex B – 2018 -The role of IMUs within Prevent. Before Prevent undertake any activity it is necessary for any relevant intelligence to have first undergone IMU Assessment. This ensures that cases are CT/DE relevant, are not part of existing activity or reach the threshold for an IHM Lead or Priority Investigation. Predominantly Prevent suitable intelligence will receive a RADO 5 outcome (CT/DE relevant but no further IMU development required) and then be disseminated to a local Prevent team. In some cases local Prevent teams may also act as a task-able asset for IMUs to assist post RADO 1-6 Outcomes, in particular, RADO 2 (IHM Lead) and RADO 4 (Intelligence Enhancement). Once a case has been deemed suitable for Prevent then the local Prevent team will continue to submit any relevant intelligence obtained through their case management back to the IMU for continuous assessment through to case closure. IMUs should consider Prevent during all IMU Assessments of intelligence and whether a local Prevent team can add value.

Policy for Prevent Practitioners, Page 8 - Section Two – The Role of the CT Case Officer (CTCO) - Intelligence cycle - Identifying all activities and incidents involving a subject (e.g. missing person reports, crime allegations etc) and ensuring the relevance of all intelligence is assessed and submitted to an IMU where appropriate.

3. **Learning Observation.** Device downloads and Internet History. Devices seized after the assault allegation on the 11/12/2019 were examined as part of that investigation but the results and/or downloads themselves were not requested by the CTCO, or at least a record of this happening is not documented on PCMT. Best practice would have been to liaise with local police to gain a copy of the download to assess against CT relevant criteria.

Similarly AMR's school browser history was apparently not checked. There are contradictory statements from teachers as to whether it is available for review but there is no documentation or exploration of this recorded on the PCMT.

Policy at the time stated the following. - Where necessary the CTCO must make further enquiries in relation to crime investigations, missing person enquiries or other non CT policing incidents in order to ensure they have a full understanding of the relevant incident, including any intelligence products that have been generated (eg. cell site data, phone downloads etc) (Policy for Prevent Practitioners 2018 - Page 16 - Section 6 - The intelligence cycle).

4. **Learning Observation.** Dovetail and Police Led decision. The Prevent decision making in this case may have been influenced by Dovetail, specifically the decision to move the first case to Police Led rather than Information Gathering. If the region had not been subject to Dovetail at the time, would information gathering have been used instead? The guidance at the time suggests Police Led is for cases that are unsuitable for Channel. Were the officers making an assessment at PGA of 'belief' for Channel, rather than 'suspect' for Information Gathering? If this is not the case, then the decision seems to have gone against the policy as they are using Police Led to conduct a contact visit to ascertain whether the case is suitable for Channel.

Police Case Management (PCM) / Police Management (PM) of cases will now be known as Police Led (PL) cases. Where a case is unsuitable for Channel the ongoing case is assessed by use of the Dynamic Investigation Framework (DIF), which aids in the creation of a Case Management Plan (CMP) to identify the actions required to address vulnerabilities and reduce risk. (2018 Prevent Guidance)

5. **Learning Observation.** School massacre as an ideology. The closure rationale for all three cases focussed on the lack of a distinct CT/DE ideology. However, guidance, albeit new at the time of the first referral, stated that school massacre/mass violence should be treated as an ideology in itself. As well as searching for school shootings on the internet, AMR acted out behaviours indicative of a school massacre ideology by attending his old school to attack pupils with a knife and apparently admitted to have a list of targets (a factor specifically mentioned in the DIF, see below). It appears this was not identified as a potential ideology or Prevent Relevant risk and therefore does not feature in decision making during the three cases. A more careful assessment of these factors could have resulted in the case being progressed further.

At the time of the first referral the thinking on 'School shooter' / obsession with massacre or extreme / mass violence was encapsulated in a joint letter dated 25/06/2019 from the Home Office Director Prevent and CTP National Coordinator for Prevent. This was sent to all CTP Regional Prevent Coordinators (RPCs), Channel Chairs, Higher Education & Further Education Prevent Coordinators, Prevent Education Officers (PEOs) and NHS Prevent Coordinators. This letter refers to the Mixed, Unclear and Unstable ideologies and describes some scenarios that may fall into this category or may be similar or overlapping. The letter explains how the risk factors, evident in this case, are Prevent Relevant.

In addition, the DIF, the Prevent Risk assessment current at the time, identifies an interest in school massacre and mass murder attacks as being of concern for Prevent, with or without another more clearly identifiable extremist ideology, copied below:

- *"IDEOLOGY: Has the Subject shown a particular fascination (openly or in private) with mass-killings (e.g.: school massacres) or terrorist attacks, or the tactics used in them? This could include an obsession with the attackers / terrorists themselves. Consider the wider context of this fascination in relation to the Subject's baseline behaviours.*
- *INTENT: Describe any relevant intent indicators, e.g.: threatening, dehumanising or hateful behaviour/language towards an "out-group", a personal fascination with mass-killings, "hit" or hate lists of people, etc.. A concerning fascination in the tactics of terrorism, mass-killings or school massacres per-se, in the absence of a unifying ideology or narrative reason for this interest, may also be indicative of a Subject who requires support through Prevent. The context needs to be explored around this interest. An obsession like this, combined with multiple/acute complex needs or grievances, might be suggestive of a higher risk Subject. Explore & explain circumstances."*

6. **Learning Observation.** I3/Open Source Checks. There appears to be a lack of open source checks throughout the three cases, or at least they are not documented on the PCMT. The FIMU completes some cursory searches, and in the first case, post closure, it is referred for open source checks but no return is subsequently noted. Considering some of the referral concerns related to online behaviour and AMR was later found to have downloaded terrorist material in 2021, not conducting thorough research into his online activity could be seen as a missed opportunity.

It is acknowledged that this was before the current I3/Open Source policy was released, however it is highlighted in the Policy for Prevent Practitioners 2018 that open source forms a fundamental part of the PGA phase.

7. **Learning Observation.** FIMU decision making/guiding Prevent cases. In all the cases the FIMU assessment appears to be suggesting Prevent outcomes for the referrals which are then adopted by the CTCO. In the first referral, the CTCO records that 'The FIMU have assessed that the case can now be closed to Prevent' when recording a closure rationale. In the second referral, the FIMU officer states 'I do not believe this new intelligence is worthy of a new Prevent referral as I do not assess it would meet the thresholds for adoption at Chanel' and in the third 'The ongoing advice to staff has always been to refer should they feel that he shows any vulnerabilities going forward. This can sometimes lead to knee jerk referrals this one being highlighted in case. I do not assess the comments made by the subject in this instance to evidence he displays extremist views, in fact he has commented that there are always two sides to a story, he obviously has an interest in current affairs but this behaviour can also be attributed to his ASD diagnoses

As per policy, only Prevent should be making assessments in relation to what Prevent activity/decision are undertaken. The Policy for Prevent Practitioners 2018 states upon receipt of a de-conflicted referral applying the Police Gateway Assessment (PGA) [Prevent is] to determine the most appropriate management process (Police or Multi-Agency Led or exit from management). (Section Two – The Role of the CT Case Officer (CTCO) - page 8 - Police Gateway Assessment)

8. **Learning Observation.** VSH/CCS. The Vulnerability Support Hub was not engaged, despite this being a strong recommendation in the DIF for cases with the types and quantity of identified concerns. The inspector in the first case recommends a referral but there is no record on the PCMT of this taking place. There is also a note that the case will be referred but a referral did not take place.

The DIF states the following:

“Identify, clarify & wherever possible corroborate any needs or vulnerabilities associated with the Subject. Detail & refer any MH concerns or diagnoses to your Vulnerability Support Hub. [...] CTCOs need to consider whether there is there anything in the Subject’s life that might be affecting their wellbeing or that might be increasing their vulnerability in any sense. [...] Mental ill health of an individual referred to PREVENT can suggest a greater vulnerability towards being targeted by groomers, or being manipulated or coerced towards terrorism offences, or (in some contexts) “self-radicalisation”. Identifying mental health issues is crucial to planning a successful support & intervention plan.”

9. **Learning Observation.** PCMT standards and data entry. All cases were dealt with by the same case officer, however, they were not all linked to the same PCMT subject (there were three identical subject pages with one PCM assigned). Additionally there were data entry/spelling mistakes. The second and third referral used slightly different spellings for AMR’s name meaning the supervisor at times could not see the first referral and therefore was unable to take it in to account in the decision making process.

10. **Learning Observation.** Multiple and Repeat referrals. Multiple/Repeat Referrals can indicate a case should be treated with a heightened risk, however this does not appear to have happened throughout the three Prevent cases AMR was the subject of. Although not in place at the time, there is now a multiple referral policy in existence from January 2023. This articulates potential elevated risks for repeat referrals and particularly mentions the risks associated with referrals closed early in the process. The policy strengthens supervisory oversight and sign off in the event of multiple/repeat referrals.

11. **Learning Observation.** Delay in registering / progressing case. There was an unexplained delay between the referral being submitted and it being registered and progressed. The assault took place within this time which shows a potential escalation in AMR’s behaviour risk levels and illustrates the advantages of prompt progression and what can happen if this is not the case.

12. **Learning Observation.** When the second and third referrals are received by the Prevent team there does not seem to have been a thorough consideration of the previous history as a whole, and the assessments rely on old information from over a year previous which was obtained from the subject during the contact visit.

In the second referral the supervisor notes that the CTCO has made sufficient enquiries with the original referrer (which consist of an email to the school safeguarding lead asking if there is any other information in addition to what is on the referral) and the posts are not CT/DE relevant, noting that they are unable to see any previous referral on PCMT (therefore not considered). The CTCO notes the case is not suitable for Channel (again is this indicative of a reluctance to progress to Information Gathering because of Dovetail?).

In the third referral the FIMU assessment, which forms the basis of the closure rationale, notes the comment that there are ‘two sides to a story’, made by AMR in the contact visit a year prior. Again no exploration of any of the surrounding circumstances such as speaking in detail to teachers about AMR’s behaviour etc. Or consideration as to what could have changed / escalated since the contact visit took place.

The CTCO guide 2020 which was current during these last two referrals states the following: *Previous Assessments: Build on every previous use of the DIF, or VAFs, or VS Hub appraisal / trigger plan, or any other assessment completed around your Subject.* (20 CMPS – CASE MANAGEMENT PLANS & INTERVENTIONS).

13. **Learning Observation.** Undue emphasis placed on the contact visit – As a continuation of the above point, throughout the first referral and in closing the third, the decision making rationale relies on the contact visit that took place. The visit happened in the presence of protective parents who had expressed views (and continued to do so) that their son was a ‘good boy’ and were willing to excuse his behaviour on a number of occasions. In addition AMR was a youth and was known to have ASD yet his comments were apparently taken at face value. AMR said his school ‘had taken things out of context’ and that he knew carrying knives was wrong and wouldn’t do it again yet in the same summary it is recorded ‘the subject showed no remorse about what he had done and did not seem to understand the consequences of his actions’. This visit and its assessment by the CTCO then has an impact on all subsequent referrals and how they are subsequently dealt with.

14. **Learning Observation.** Disguised Compliance. Several times throughout the first referral AMR makes contradictory statements that could be indicative of disguised compliance. When interviewed in relation to the s.47 assault at his old school AMR stated that he had no intention to use the knife yet he had also told a police officer that he was going to use the knife to finish off after hitting him with a hockey stick. The second example is included in the learning point above whereby AMR tells officers that he knows carrying knives is wrong but the assessment of the CTCO is that he shows no remorse, was he just saying what he thought they wanted to hear? Finally, several times AMR denies looking at inappropriate content online and attributes it either to a misunderstanding or the teachers unfairly targeting him. The

point of disguised compliance is pertinent given the reliance on the contact visit to close the cases. If the possibility of disguised compliance had been explored it may have led to some of the cases being progressed further.

Learning Themes – (These noted themes correspond with data points from the Dignate 2 tracker spreadsheet. The purpose is to collate data for comparison across the cohort in order to identify long term trends and themes).

- Repeat referrals
- Youth
- I3 – Not completed.
- Mental Health
- Neurodiversity
- Violent offending
- Nonviolent offending
- Online activity
- Not referred to CCS/VSH
- Disguised Compliance

5) **Appendix – Dignate 2 Terms of Reference**

The Counter Terrorism Prevent strategy seeks to identify individuals vulnerable to being drawn into or supporting terrorism. It is accepted that some future terrorists will have a Prevent trace. Dignate monitors this cohort of individuals to seek further opportunities and add reassurance that we would detect escalations in CT risk and trends in these cases.

Dignate reviews will take place when a terrorist attack (domestic or International), a TACT (or CT related) offence, a serious violent non – TACT offence, or suicide (attempt) is committed by someone who has any prior involvement in the Prevent Programme.

Dignate supports the CT Police Network fulfil the recommendation made by HMIC Stockwell – Learning the Lessons, ‘to ensure that an effective structure exists that can capture emerging issues, promulgate changes and then ensure that any lessons learned are applied’.

The purpose of this review is the following:

- Collate critical data from this case and review against other Dignate cohorts to seek organisational learning opportunities by capturing high-level themes, trends and good practice.
- Develop a chronology of touchpoints this subject has had with police from the first Prevent engagement until Dignate trigger incident.
- Review these records in line with national policy and guidance.
- Identification of local or regional learning or good practice.
- Identification of national learning or good practice.