



Bristol Safeguarding  
Children Board

making safeguarding everybody's business

## **Forced Marriage and Safeguarding: Practice Guidance**

**BSCB acknowledges its debt to Swindon Local Safeguarding Child Board and HM Govt. in producing this document**

## Table of Contents

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Part I - Guidance</b>	
1 <b>Purpose</b>	4
2 <b>Scope</b>	4
3 <b>Definition and difference between arranged and Forced Marriages.</b>	4
Forced Marriage	4
Honour based violence	4
Forced Marriage Unit	5
4 <b>Prevalence</b>	5
5 <b>Communities at risk</b>	5
Forced marriage of people with Learning Difficulties	6
Why are People with Learning Difficulties forced into marriage?	6
6 <b>Legislation</b>	6
Legal remedies to protect children	7
Where a forced marriage has already taken place	7
Parental Responsibility	7
7 <b>Consequences of Forced Marriage</b>	8
Options available to persons facing Forced Marriage	8
8 <b>Signs and symptoms</b>	9
Warning signs of actual/potential Forced Marriage	9
Other signs to take seriously if in conjunction with the above	9
9 <b>Dos and Don'ts: First Steps</b>	10
The 'One Chance' Rule	10
10 <b>Prompts to ask and information to gather</b>	11
Information to be gathered	11
Information to be gathered if the person is going abroad	12
11 <b>How to contact the Next Link Forced Marriage worker</b>	13
<b>Part II - Multi-Agency Procedures</b>	14
12 <b>Child Protection: Key principles for all agencies</b>	14
Suspicion that there maybe a risk of forced marriage	14
What to do following a disclosure that a forced marriage has already taken place	15
13 <b>Children's Social Care</b>	16
Actions to be taken on receipt of a referral regarding Forced Marriage	16
Provision of accommodation	17
Protecting the young persons whereabouts and identity	18
14 <b>Police</b>	18
Disclosure by young person	19
Allegation by third party	19
15 <b>Health</b>	20
Disclosure of a Forced Marriage	21
Third Party Disclosures	21
Female Genital Mutilation	22
16 <b>Education (Schools and Further Education)</b>	23
Guidance for Schools	23

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Disclosure of Forced Marriage (by Student) 23</li> <li>○ Where the student is going overseas immediately 24</li> <li>○ When a student stops attending school 24</li> </ul>	
	Further Education (or University/Higher Education) 25	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Disclosure of Forced Marriage (by Student) 25</li> <li>○ Where the student is going overseas immediately 25</li> <li>○ When a student stops attending College/University or Further Education Establishment 26</li> </ul>	
17	<b>Protection of Vulnerable Adults</b>	26
	<b>Appendices</b>	
	1. Useful Links and Contacts	27
	2. Safety Planning	33
	3. Scenarios	35
	4. Flowchart A: Multi-Agency management of allegations of 'Forced Marriage'	36
	5. Flowchart B: Management of allegations of 'Forced Marriage' received by Children's Social Care	37

**This procedure does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and does not create any contractual rights.**

**History of most recent changes – MUST be completed**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Origin of Change (e.g. TU request, change in legislation etc)</b>

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The threat of a possible forced marriage is something that many young people find hard to talk about. They may not want to reveal details about their family or put themselves in a position where they may be separated from their family and community. However, many young people in this position do want help and wish to be asked about their situation.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This guidance is designed to provide professionals and practitioners in Bristol with information and advice about how to respond to indications that a young person is at risk of a Forced Marriage. This guidance is only to be used in conjunction with victims of forced marriage who are under 18.
- 2.2 The guidance is generally focussed on women. This is because 85% of those seeking help regarding forced marriage are women. Also, the consequences of Forced Marriage for women are different than those for men. However, much of the advice given also applies to men and men at risk should be provided with the same level of assistance and respect when they seek help to avoid or leave a forced marriage.

## 3. Definition and difference between arranged and forced marriages.

- 3.0.1 There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. In forced marriages, one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some vulnerable adults, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.
- 3.0.2 The government regards forced marriage as an abuse of human rights and a form of domestic abuse and, where it affects children and young people, child abuse. It can happen to both men and women although most cases involve young women and girls aged between 13 and 30. There is no “typical” victim of forced marriage. Some may be under 18 years old, some may be over 18 years old, some may have a disability, some may have young children and some may be spouses from overseas.

### 3.1 Forced Marriage definition

- 3.1.1 A **Forced Marriage** is therefore defined as:

*“A marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure”<sup>1</sup>*

- 3.1.2 Forced marriage cannot be justified on religious grounds; every major religion condemns it and freely given consent is a prerequisite of Christian Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh marriages.
- 3.1.3 Parents who force their children to marry may describe a variety of motives for doing so including protecting their children, preserving cultural or religious traditions responding to pressure from extended family; it is unlikely that they will consider that they are doing anything wrong or abusive. Failure to agree to a forced marriage or an attempt to escape a forced marriage is likely to be considered as a significant affront and could result in actual or threats of violence to ensure compliance.

### 3.2 Honour based violence

---

1. Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced marriage, HMG, 2009

- 3.2.1 The terms “honour crime” or “honour-based violence” or “izzat<sup>2</sup>” embrace a variety of crimes of violence (mainly, but not exclusively, against women), including assault, imprisonment and murder, where the person is being punished by their family or their community.
- 3.2.2 They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour. In transgressing this correct code of behaviour, the person shows that they have not been properly controlled to conform by their family. This is to the “shame” or “dishonour” of the family.

### 3.3 The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU)<sup>3</sup>

- 3.3.1 The FMU is a joint Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Home Office unit which works with other government departments, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations to develop effective policy for tackling forced marriage.
- 3.3.2 The FMU is always happy to talk to frontline practitioners handling cases of forced marriage at any stage in a case. It can offer information and advice on the range of tools available to combat forced marriage, including legal remedies, overseas assistance and how to approach victims. Staff from the FMU can also speak at conferences or run training workshops to teams of frontline practitioners, and provide free leaflets and posters.

## 4. Prevalence

- 4.1 The Report published by DCSF *Forced Marriage - Prevalence and Service Response (2008)* found that:
- the number of cases of either actual or threatened Forced Marriage (FM) is estimated to be between 5,000 and 8,000. This estimate does not include a potentially large number of victims who have not come to the attention of any agencies or professionals, since a large general population survey would be required to estimate the prevalence of these ‘hidden’ victims.
  - **Within local organisations, 41% of reported cases concerned victims under the age of 18.**
  - Of the FM cases reported to local , almost two-thirds related to threats of marriage (62%) and just over one-third (38%) related to marriages that had taken place.
  - Whilst FM is not exclusively an issue for Asian communities, 97% of those seeking help or advice relating to FM from local organisations were identified as Asian. This closely reflects the data regarding country of origin held by the FMU for the cases which have come to their attention, where in 2008 64% of cases related to Pakistani victims, 15% related to Bangladeshi victims, and 8% related to Indian victims.
  - 96% of FM cases reported to local organisations related to female victims and only 4% to male victims.

## 5. Communities at Risk

- 5.0.1 The majority of cases of forced marriage reported to date in the UK involve South Asian families. This is partly a reflection of the fact that there is a large, established South Asian population in the UK. However, it is clear that forced marriage is not solely a South Asian problem and there have been cases involving families from the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Some forced marriages take place in the UK with no overseas element, while others

---

2 Izzat - the honour or reputation of a person, organisation, or institution - a term used to describe a variety of concepts linked to the honour of the family or an individual.

3 Call: 020 7008 0151 (Mon-Fri: 09.00-17.00), Email: [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk), Web: [www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage](http://www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage)  
Address: FMU, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Old Admiralty Building, London, SW1A 2PA  
Out of hours emergencies: 020 7008 1500. Ask to speak to the Global Response Centre.

involve a partner coming from overseas or a British citizen being sent abroad. There are particular risks to people, in the communities outlined, that have learning difficulties. Any professional working with young people that have learning difficulties, from the communities outlined, should consider the possible risk of forced marriage. Where one or other young person being forced to marry is an adult the Safeguarding Adults Team should always be contacted (see S.17: Protection of Vulnerable Adults).

5.0.2 Those at heightened risk from Forced marriage would include:

- Young people, 13 -18 years old;
- girls;
- young people with learning difficulties;
- young people with physical disabilities;
- young people who are perceived by their families to be presenting difficult or challenging behaviours;
- Young people who are suffering from mental health issues;
- young people who are perceived to be more westernised in their outlook.

## **5.1 Forced marriage of people with Learning Difficulties**

5.1.1 The forced marriage of people with learning difficulties is a largely hidden problem. Little data has been collected on prevalence and there is a widespread lack of awareness of the particular features of such forced marriages. Instead, the information we have has largely come from the frontline professionals who have encountered cases.

5.1.2 The majority of the cases of forced marriage reported to date in the UK involve South Asian families (Forced Marriage Unit). The prevalence of learning disabilities in South Asian communities is up to three times higher than in other communities, primarily for reasons of social and material deprivation as well as issues over access to health-care<sup>4</sup>.

## **5.2 Why are people with learning disabilities forced into marriage?**

5.2.1 People with learning disabilities may be forced into marriage for the same reasons that anyone is forced into marriage. However, there are reasons which are more specific to these cases.

- Marriage can be seen as a means of providing a carer and continuing support. Parents may be primary carers. As they get older and less able to provide support, they may view marriage as a means of ensuring continuing care for their son or daughter with learning disabilities.
- Marriage can be seen as a means of improving the chances of getting a visa to the UK . A person with learning disabilities may be seen as easier to deceive or coerce into such a marriage and into then acting as a visa sponsor.

5.2.2 Families may believe that marriage will “cure” learning disabilities and/or allow a person with learning disabilities to lead a “normal” life.

5.2.3 Young people who have a learning disabilities have the right to marry. However, assistance must be provided to people with learning disabilities, who have capacity, entering into marriage to ensure (a) informed consent to marriage and sex and (b) understanding by both spouses of what their marriage might entail.

---

<sup>4</sup> *Learning Disabilities and Ethnicity*, Department of Health, 2001, pg. 10

## 6. Legislation

- 6.0.1 There is no specific criminal offence in England and Wales of “forcing someone to marry”. Criminal offences may nevertheless be committed.
- 6.0.2 Perpetrators – usually parents or family members – could be prosecuted for offences including threatening behaviour, assault, kidnap, abduction, theft (of passport), threats to kill, imprisonment and murder.
- 6.0.3 Sexual intercourse without consent is rape, regardless of whether this occurs within a marriage or not.
- 6.0.4 Under UK law, forced marriage of a child/young person under 18 is child abuse.

### 6.1 Legal remedies to protect children

- 6.1.1 For a child/young person who is in immediate danger, the police can use Powers of Protection and anyone including children’s social care can apply for an Emergency Protection Order (Children Act 1989).
- 6.1.2 An application for a care or supervision order can be made under the Children Act 1989 or wardship proceedings may be issued in the High Court; Especially if the Young person is being moved to a place of safety outside the care of their family of origin.
- 6.1.3 Forced Marriage Protection Orders can be sought under the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007. The Act makes provision for protecting both adults and children at risk of being forced into marriage and offers protection for those who have already been forced into marriage.

### 6.2 Where a Forced Marriage has already taken place

- 6.2.1 A spouse who is the victim of a forced marriage can initiate nullity (as long as this is initiated within three years of the date of the marriage) or divorce proceedings to end the marriage.
- 6.2.2 The child or young person should be informed that a religious divorce would not end the marriage under UK law.
- 6.2.3 A child or young person can also take action to protect themselves under the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007, Family Law Act 1996 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. These orders include:
  - Forced marriage protection order;
  - Non-molestation order;
  - Occupation order;
  - Injunction against harassment.
- 6.2.4 Any young person who wishes to access any of the above legal remedies must be strongly advised to seek independent legal advice from an appropriately qualified and experienced solicitor.

### 6.3 Parental Responsibility

#### 6.3.1 *Who has parental responsibility?*

A mother automatically has parental responsibility for her child from birth. However, the conditions for fathers gaining parental responsibility varies throughout the UK.

#### 6.3.2 *For births registered in England and Wales*

In England and Wales, if the parents of a child are married to each other at the time of the birth, or if they have jointly adopted a child, then they both have parental responsibility. Parents do not lose parental responsibility if they divorce this applies to both the resident and the non-resident parent.

This is not automatically the case for unmarried parents. According to current law, a mother always has parental responsibility for her child. A father, however, has this responsibility only if he is married to the mother when the child is born or has acquired legal responsibility for his child through one of these three routes:

- (from 1 December 2003) by jointly registering the birth of the child with the mother;
- by a parental responsibility agreement with the mother;
- by a parental responsibility order, made by a court.

Living with the mother, even for a long time, does not give a father parental responsibility and if the parents are not married, parental responsibility does not always pass to the natural father if the mother dies.

All parents (including adoptive parents) have a legal duty to financially support their child, whether they have parental responsibility or not.

A Local Authority can also take on and 'share' parental responsibility with a child's parents if a court has granted an interim or full care order (s.31 Children Act 1989). This is done in order to ensure that the Local Authority has the powers to act to protect a child or young person (e.g. In moving a child to a place of safety to avoid the risk of harm from parents due to a risk of Forced Marriage)<sup>5</sup>.

## **7. Consequences of Forced Marriage**

- 7.0.1 Women forced to marry may find it very difficult to initiate any action to end the marriage and may be subjected to repeated rape (sometimes until they become pregnant) and ongoing domestic abuse within the marriage. In some cases they suffer violence and abuse from the extended family, often being forced to undertake all the household chores for the family. Victims are frequently trapped in a relationship marred by physical and sexual abuse. The impact this has on children within the marriage is immense.
- 7.0.2 Both male and female victims of forced marriage may feel that running away is their only option. For many people, especially women from black and minority ethnic communities, leaving their family can be especially hard. They may have no experience of life outside the family. Leaving may mean they lose their children and friends. Those that do leave often live in fear of their own families who will go to considerable lengths to find them and ensure their return.
- 7.0.3 Families may solicit the help of others to find family members who have run away, or involve the police by reporting them missing or falsely accusing the person of a crime (for example theft). Some families have traced individuals through medical and dental records, bounty hunters, private investigators, local taxi drivers, members of the community and shopkeepers or through National Insurance numbers, benefit records, school and college records. Sometimes, having traced them, the family may subject them to further violence or abuse or even murder them (so called "honour killing").

### **7.1 Options available to persons facing forced marriage**

- 7.1.1 If someone fears they may be forced to marry, there are limited choices, they could:
- a) leave their family, start a new life and possibly have to remain in hiding.
  - b) leave their family, start a new life knowing they face a life of ostracism and isolation.
  - c) leave their family, start a new life and prosecute their family.
  - d) return to the family and hope the situation can be resolved.
  - e) seek legal protection.

---

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/ParentsRights/DG\\_4002954](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/ParentsRights/DG_4002954) for further information regarding Parental Responsibility.

If someone is already trapped in a forced marriage, there are limited choices, they could:

- a) stay with the marriage.
- b) flee the marriage, start a new life and possibly have to remain in hiding.
- c) leave their family, start a new life knowing they face a life of ostracism and isolation.
- d) flee the marriage, start a new life and prosecute the family.
- e) leave the family and publicly refuse to sponsor their spouses visa application for entry to the UK (a young person cannot act as a sponsor until age 21).

7.1.2 All of the above are difficult and potentially dangerous decisions to make. Any Young Person facing Forced marriage needs to be well supported to make the right choice for them.

## 8. Signs and Symptoms

8.0.1 The following signs and symptoms could indicate that a young person is facing forced marriage. Though, the presentation of these signs and symptoms could also indicate that there are other difficulties and types of abuse that would require a multi-agency response also.

### 8.1 Warning signs of actual/potential victim of Forced Marriage

- Absence and persistent absence from School or College
- Request for extended leave of absence from School or College and failure to return from visits to country of origin
- Siblings forced to marry
- Early marriage of siblings
- Self-harm or suicide of sibling
- Running away from home
- Accompanied to doctors or clinic
- Self harm
- Attempted suicide
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility and not being provided with suitable education at home
- Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger
- a girl may report that she has been taken to the doctor's, to be examined to see if she is a virgin.
- cut or shaved hair as a form of punishment for being disobedient

### 8.2 Other signs to take seriously if in conjunction with the above

<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>FAMILY HISTORY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Surveillance by siblings</li><li>▪ Decline in school behaviour, Engagement or performance</li><li>▪ Poor exam results</li><li>▪ Not allowed to attend extracurricular activities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Death of a parent</li><li>▪ Family disputes</li><li>▪ Unreasonable restrictions e.g. kept at home by parents ("house arrest") and financial restrictions</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prevented from going on to further/higher education</li> </ul>	
<p><b>HEALTH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acid attacks</li> <li>▪ Eating disorders</li> <li>▪ Depression</li> <li>▪ Isolation</li> <li>▪ Substance misuse</li> <li>▪ Early/unwanted pregnancy</li> <li>▪ Female genital mutilation</li> <li>▪ Removal from a day centre of a person with a physical or learning disability</li> <li>▪ requests of from family health professionals to confirm the virginity of a girl</li> </ul>	<p><b>POLICE INVOLVEMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Victim or other siblings reported missing</li> <li>▪ Reports of domestic abuse, harassment or breaches of the peace</li> <li>▪ Female genital mutilation</li> <li>▪ The victim reported for offences e.g. shoplifting or substance misuse</li> <li>▪ Threats/attempts to kill</li> <li>▪ Reports of other offences such as rape or kidnap</li> </ul>

## 9. Do's and Don'ts: first steps

### The 'One Chance' Rule

Practitioner's are likely to only have one chance to speak to a potential victim and may only have one chance to save a life. If the victim is allowed to walk out of the door without support being offered that one chance may have been wasted.

#### 9.1 What to do.

9.1.1 Forced Marriage places individuals at risk of rape and possible physical harm. Some cases have resulted in the reluctant spouse being murdered. Where an allegation of Forced Marriage is raised, by a young person or a third party, the following steps should be taken:

##### Do Not:

- x send the individual away in the belief that it is not being taken seriously;
- x inform the victim's family, friends or members of the community that the victim has sought help; or
- x attempt to be a mediator (this could greatly increase the risk to the young person, there have been instances where the young person has been murdered during attempts to mediate it could also further expose the young person to emotional abuse and unwarranted pressure).
- x breach confidentiality (i.e. inform their family of the disclosure)

##### Do:

- ✓ see the individual immediately in a secure and private place
- ✓ see the individual on their own – even if they attend with other
- ✓ obtain and record as much information as possible as this may be the **one chance** to do so!

- ✓ if the person is under 18 refer them to your agencies designated lead for safeguarding children before you refer to children's social care
- ✓ ask them sensitively how things are at home
- ✓ don't be afraid to ask direct questions regarding your concerns, e.g. Where are they going on holiday? How long for? Do they want to go? Has anyone discussed marriage with them?
- ✓ recognise and respect the individual's wishes
- ✓ remind them that they have the right to enter into a marriage with their full and free consent and the right to make decisions about their lives
- ✓ establish a means of contacting the person discreetly in the future
- ✓ Following initial contact safety measures will need to be discussed, this will include establishing a means of contact and code word as you suggest but also a cover story.
  - If someone else picks up the phone who are you?
  - If victim is followed and seen with you what should she say?
  - If you are confronted at a meeting who are you?
  - You must agree a cover story.

## 10. Prompts to ask and information to gather

### 10.1 Information to be gathered

10.1.1 The following information will be needed when dealing with a disclosure of Forced Marriage in order to ensure that the relevant agencies i.e. Police, Children's Social Care, are able to act to protect the young person. If possible attempt to gather the information detailed below. If this is not possible still make the referral.

- ✓ Details of the person making the allegation; their contact details; their relationship to the young person under threat. Date of the allegation/disclosure. Details of the young person, including:
  - Name
  - Address
  - Nationality
  - Age
  - Date and place of birth
  - Immigration status (is the young person a British National, do they have dual nationality, are they a foreign national and have leave to remain in the UK)
  - Passport details
  - School details
  - Employment details
  - Full details of the allegation
  - Name and address of parents or those with parental responsibility
  - National Insurance number (if they have one)
  - Driving licence number (if they have one)

- ✓ A list from the person under threat of all friends and family who can be trusted, including their contact details.
- ✓ Background information including:
  - Schools attended
  - Previous involvement with children's social care or Team Around the Child
  - Doctors
  - Other Health Services (e.g. CAMHS)
- ✓ Details about any threats, abuse or other hostile action against the person, whether reported by the young person or a third party.
  - If possible obtain a recent photograph or other identification documents
  - Record any distinguishing features, e.g. birthmarks, tattoos, etc.
- ✓ Establish the nature and level of risk to the safety of the young person. For example:
  - Is she pregnant (consider the potential risk to the unborn baby)?
  - Do they have a secret boyfriend or girlfriend? (if this is the case there may also be a risk to the boyfriend and a referral may also need to be considered to ensure that they are protected).
- ✓ Establish if there are any other family members at risk of forced marriage or if there is a family history of forced marriage or abuse.

## **10.2 Information to be gathered if young person is going abroad**

- a) A photocopy of their passport for retention. Encourage them to keep details of their passport number and the place and date of issue.
- b) As much information as possible about the family, including:
  - Full name and date of birth of the person under threat
  - Their parents' names
  - Any address where they may be staying overseas
  - Potential spouse's name (if known)
  - Date of the proposed wedding (if known)
  - The names of the potential spouse's parents (if known)
  - Addresses of the extended family in the UK and overseas and any known phone numbers.
- c) Information that only they would be aware of (if the victim is a British national, this may assist any subsequent interview at an Embassy/British High Commission in case another person of the same age and gender is produced pretending to be them).
- d) Details of any travel plans and people likely to accompany them.
- e) Names and addresses of any close relatives remaining in the UK.
- f) A safe means by which to contact them e.g. a mobile telephone that will function overseas. Record the number.
- g) Details of the third party in order to maintain contact in case the person contacts them whilst overseas or on her return.
- h) An estimated return date. Ask that they contact you without fail on their return.

- i) A written statement by the person explaining that they want the police, children's social care, a teacher or a third party to act on their behalf if they do not return by a certain date.

## **11. How to contact the Next Link Forced Marriage worker**

11.1 Next Link Domestic Abuse Services provide specialist a wide range of city wide services and safe temporary accommodation to women and children who have experienced Domestic Violence and Abuse. They have services in Bristol B&NES and South Gloucestershire. Services include safe-house accommodation, resettlement and outreach services and crisis response services. They have a specialist South Asian crisis response and resettlement/outreach services. They have a specialist Forced Marriage service with a South Asian support worker who is able to support young people who are at risk of or who have been forced to marry. They can also be contacted for advice and assistance.

Tel: 0117 925 0680

Mobile: 07793874979

Text phone: 07714290011

email: [enquiries@nextlinkhousing.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@nextlinkhousing.co.uk)

Web: [www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk](http://www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk)

**See also Appendix 1: Useful links and contacts for other organisations that may provide advise and assistance.**

## Part II - Multi-Agency Guidance

### 12. Child Protection: Key principles for all agencies

#### 12.1 What to do if the young person involved is under 18 years old or has children under 18 years old.

- 12.1.1 There are many parallels between Forced Marriage and domestic abuse and child abuse. If a young person has approached a social worker, teacher, doctor, nurse or police officer this will often be a 'last resort' and could be the 'one chance' that you have to act to protect the young person.
- 12.1.2 If the young person is under 18 or has children under 18 and does not want any referral to be made e.g. to children's social care, the practitioner will need to consider whether their wishes should be respected or whether their safety should be respected or whether their safety, or that of their children, requires that further action be taken (see Information Sharing Protocol)<sup>6</sup>.
- 12.1.3 If you have concerns for the safety of a young person under 18 years old refer to the child protection procedures using South West Child Protection Procedures: ([www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)).
- 12.1.4 Refer to the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) if there is any suspicion that a crime has been, or may be, committed. Liaise with the police if there are concerns about the safety of the young person, their siblings or their children.
- 12.1.5 Where it is the case that the young persons parents work in a professional capacity and/or work with children or vulnerable adults, (i.e. teacher, GP, Nursery nurse, Social Worker) the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) should be notified of the concern and the risk of forced marriage. This may result in action being taken in the form of a strategy discussion to consider whether the parent presents a risk to children or vulnerable adults and if so what action should then be taken. This may include referral to ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) and the relevant registration/governing body for the parents profession.

#### 12.2 Suspicions that there maybe a risk of forced marriage

- 12.2.1 Anyone working with children may have suspicions regarding the risk of forced marriage. You may have noted behaviour in a young person that leads you to suspect they may be at risk of forced marriage (see 'Signs and Symptoms'). In these instances where there has not been a disclosure from the young person you should

##### **Action to be taken**

- ✓ speak to the young person about your concerns
- ✓ gather as much information as possible (see 'Prompts to ask and information to gather')
- ✓ maintain accurate records of what is said or done including advice given
- ✓ liaise with your agency safeguarding children lead
- ✓ if possible establish whether there has been a history of forced marriage in the family i.e. Siblings, extended family forced to marry
- ✓ liaise with police (CAIT) or children's social care to establish if there are any related incidents i.e. domestic abuse, missing persons, self-harming behaviours
- ✓ if there is any concern that a student is at risk of Forced Marriage you must follow multi-agency child protection procedures<sup>7</sup> and refer to children's social care, where there is

<sup>6</sup> Information Sharing Protocol: [www.bristol.gov.uk/childreninformationsharing](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/childreninformationsharing)

<sup>7</sup> South West Child Protection Procedures: [www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)

evidence or suspicion that a crime has been committed you should also contact the police CAIT.

- ✓ Establish a safe means of ongoing contact.

**Do not**

- x ignore or treat any concerns you have or that are raised by young person as 'merely' a domestic issue
- x abrogate responsibility to follow up your concerns or allegations made
- x approach members of the young person's family where known to you (they may have siblings and extended family) this may alert them to your concerns and place the young person in danger
- x attempt to be a mediator between the young person and their family

**12.3 What to do following a disclosure that a forced marriage has already taken place**

- 12.3.1 Many cases of forced marriage come to light when a person (particularly a woman) is reported missing or there are allegations of abuse and domestic violence. However, some cases are brought to the attention of the police or children's social care when a victim is forced to act as a sponsor for their spouse's immigration to the UK. The child or young person may approach a teacher, children's social care or the police because they are concerned that they may need to act as a sponsor for their spouse's immigration to the UK.
- 12.3.2 In these situations, the practitioner should reassure the child or young person that they will not be required to act as a sponsor until they are 21 years old.
- 12.3.3 The child or young person may be reluctant to tell the immigration service that that they are a victim of a forced marriage because of threats and fear of reprisals from the family. A person whose application to enter the UK, as a spouse, is refused has a right to know the reasons why – and the right to appeal against the decision. This can place the child or young person in a difficult position being asked to sponsor the spouse .
- 12.3.4 Confronting their family may be extremely risky for the child or young person. They may not get the support they hope for and further pressure may be put on them to support the visa application. These risks must be discussed with the child or young person if only to exclude this option.
- 12.3.5 Cases of forced marriage may initially be reported to police or children's social care as cases of domestic abuse. Spouses forced into marriage may suffer domestic abuse but feel unable to leave due to a lack of family support, economic pressures and other social circumstances – some may fear losing their children.

**Action to be taken:**

- ✓ Where it comes to light that a person is a victim of a forced marriage and though they are over 18 they have children under 18 or younger siblings who may also be at risk of forced marriage a referral must be made to children's social care
- ✓ where there is evidence that a crime has been committed refer to the police (CAIT)
- ✓ Where the child young person who has been forced to marry is under 18 a referral must be made to children's social care
- ✓ if the young person forced into marriage chooses to remain a 'risk' plan must be made.

**Children's social care will then (See attached Flowchart):**

- Collect as much of information required as possible from the referrer (see 'Prompts to ask and information to gather')
- Record full details of the young person together with details of the marriage including date and place

- Record the name, address and date of birth of the spouse together with interview dates for their visa (if known)
- Refer to the Forced Marriage Unit if the marriage has an overseas dimension or the child or young person has concerns about their “spouse” getting a visa
- If they require specific legal advice suggest they should independently consult a family panel solicitor
- If the child or young person does not want to return to the family home, then a strategy for leaving home should be devised and personal safety advice discussed
- Consider how to maintain contact using appropriate community workers, health workers Teaching staff etc.
- ensure that you refer the child or young person to police (CAIT)
- Referring them, with their consent, to appropriate local and national support groups, counselling services and women’s groups that have a history of working with survivors of domestic abuse and forced marriage
- Using the legal remedies below to protect the child or young person from family members if they decide to leave the family home or wish the spouse to leave the family home.

**If the child or young person wishes to remain at the family home, try to maintain contact without placing them at risk. A risk assessment should also be undertaken. This should be undertaken with input and advice from the Police (CAIT). Actions to be considered in any risk assessment plan would include:**

- **putting a marker on the young persons passport;**
- **suggesting the the young person call the worker every 2 days;**
- **Police should be the lead agency for implementing and managing a risk assessment and safety planning process.**

## **13. Children's Social Care**

13.0.1 Children's social care (Local Authority) has a duty to make enquiries where it is alleged that a child has been or is likely to suffer abuse or neglect under S.47 Children Act 1989. Forced Marriage is child abuse and places children and young people at risk of physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

### **13.1 Actions to be taken on receipt of a referral regarding Forced Marriage**

- ✓ Any referral received from another agency alleging Forced Marriage must be immediately treated as a child protection referral and appropriate enquiries undertaken

Enquiries should include:

- discussion of the allegation with the forced marriage unit
- checks of police and social care records (including adult care) for past referrals of family members to include domestic violence/missing person referrals (See 'signs and symptoms').

- Talk to the young person about whether they can avoid being taken overseas where this is the particular concern if unavoidable gather relevant information see 'prompts to ask and information to gather'
- liaise with the school, college to identify any concerns
- consider implications of dual nationality
- ✓ follow the flow chart in appendix 4
- ✓ take the appropriate action to protect the young person, this could include:
  - seeking advice from the legal department
  - if the risk to the young person is immediate consider obtaining a court order or it may be necessary for the police to use their powers of protection (see Legal advice)
  - ensure that the young person is provided with accommodation that will ensure that they are safe
  - when providing a young person with accommodation (e.g. foster care) be mindful that the young person may not wish to be placed with someone from the same community/ ethnic background as they may continue to feel vulnerable.

### 13.1.1 Do not:

- x attempt to mediate or involve the family in any enquiry, to do so could place the young person at significant risk of harm ;
- x visit the family to ask them whether it is true that they are planning to force their son/daughter into a forced marriage;
- x write to the family to invite them to a meeting to answer the allegation that they are forcing their child to marry;
- x when using transport including taking a young person to new or emergency accommodation do not use taxi's (informal networks of taxi drivers have been used to provide information regarding the whereabouts of young people to family members this would place the young person at risk).

13.1.2 Where the Young Person (under 18) has been brought into the UK by their spouses family as part of a Forced Marriage and does not wish to remain in the marriage children's social care should:

- ✓ consider the young person in the same manner as an unaccompanied asylum seeking minor;
- ✓ provide the young person with accommodation under S.20 Children Act 1989<sup>8</sup>;
- ✓ even if the young person has children of their own they should be still regarded as an unaccompanied child.

### 13.2 Provision of accommodation

13.2.1 Children and young people who have been forced to marry and those that have become estranged from their families due to their refusal to accept a forced marriage will often require accommodation for a long period to enable them to establish a life away from their families. Accommodation provided to young people must be safe and be able to protect them from attempts to trace them by family through formal and informal means. The Police (CAIT) should always be consulted and would be the lead agency in making arrangements for the safe provision of alternative accommodation whenever there is a need to provide alternative safe accommodation for a young person. Planning for the provision of safe

---

8. LAC 13 (2003) if a child has no parent or guardian in this country it is presumed that they will come under s.20 and become looked after unless an assessment reveals particular factors that suggests an alternative approach is more appropriate

accommodation for a young person must be done by a service manager and the Detective Inspector responsible for CAIT.

- 13.2.2 S.20 (3) Children Act 1989 requires every local authority to provide accommodation for any child in need within their area who has reached the age of 16 and whose welfare the local authority considers is likely to be seriously prejudiced if they do not provide them with accommodation.
- 13.2.3 The local authority also has the power to provide accommodation under s.17 (6) if there is not a need for the young person to be 'looked after'. However, the use of this power is almost always used to provide accommodation for a child with their family. Provision of accommodation under this power is unlikely to provide a young person with the necessary level of protection they need. However, the young person may not wish to be 'looked after' and alternative accommodation should be considered where this is the case (e.g. refuge, hostel accommodation).
- 13.2.4 When a young person is estranged from their family or at risk because of their refusal to accept a forced marriage (even if this marriage has already occurred) the local authority should provide accommodation under s.20.
- 13.2.5 Where the young person is under 16 they can be offered accommodation under s.20 as an alternative to becoming subject of a Care Order. However, parental responsibility remains with their parents until they reach 16 and the local authority will not be able to provide the same level of protection afforded by a Care Order.
- 13.2.6 Where a person has been provided with emergency accommodation and then seeks to move to more independent accommodation it remains the duty of the local authority to provide accommodation where the young person is looked after under s.20 or provided with accommodation under s.17. When planning a move to more independent accommodation it is important that the young person is fully consulted and that their wishes and feelings are taken into account.
- 13.2.7 A young person may be in the 'looked after' by the local authority for sometime after leaving their family. Where the young person has been looked after by the local authority for 13 weeks or more and has ceased to be looked after the local authority continues to have a duty to support the young person<sup>9</sup>.

### **13.3 Protecting the young persons whereabouts and identity**

- 13.3.1 Where a young person has been moved to a 'place of safety' and supported in leaving their family, Children's Social Care will ensure that access to their ICS Database record is 'locked down' to the allocated Social Workers team only. This is to minimise the risk of a network being used by the family to recover information regarding the young persons whereabouts. Any attempts to breach this 'lock down' by 'unauthorised' persons must be reported and may result in disciplinary procedures being taken. Again, the Police (CAIT) as the lead agency in this area should always be consulted by a the relevant Service manager from Children's Social Care whenever measures need to be taken covertly to protect and relocate a young person.
- 13.3.2 Measures to protect the identity of a young person and their whereabouts can be undertaken. This can include the identification of alternative safe accommodation. This action should be led by and directed by the Police (CAIT) who are the agency best place to manage this work.

## **14. Police**

- 14.1.1 Police have specific duties and functions in relation to protecting young people from Forced Marriage. Police officers need to be aware of the particular risks and signs of forced marriage and that those living within a forced marriage or at risk of being forced to marry

---

9. S.23 a, b and c Children Act 1989 as amended by Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

are at risk of significant harm and the police may be in an immediate position to act to protect the young person.

14.1.2 Cases of forced marriage should only be handled by an officer within the Public Protection Unit (PPU) who has been nominated by being both sufficiently experienced in dealing with cases of actual or suspected forced marriage.

14.1.3 All cases of alleged actual or suspected forced marriage should immediately be directed to the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) at Lockleaze Police Station.

14.1.4 A referral to the police by young person alleging they are being forced to marry or are the victim of a forced marriage be the 'one chance' to act to protect the young person it is essential that any police officer receiving such an allegation acts promptly to ensure the safety of the young person concerned. Where an officer receives a referral or disclosure alleging that a young person is at risk of forced marriage they should take the following action.

## **14.2 Disclosure by Young Person**

### **Action to be taken**

- ✓ any interview with the young person concerned should not be undertaken in their family home this will expose them to undue influence or pressure from family members
- ✓ contact CAIT immediately
- ✓ collect as much information as required (see 'Prompts to ask and information to be gathered')
- ✓ undertake an immediate risk assessment of the potential risks to that young person. If appropriate agree a safety plan that will minimise any risk whilst enquiries continue.
- ✓ discuss the case with the forced marriage unit
- ✓ refer the victim to Nextlink who will be able to provide support and advice
- ✓ consider whether the young person needs assistance with communication due to language needs or other factors (is deaf, is visually impaired has learning difficulties)
- ✓ check police and social care records regarding previous referrals involving the victim and their extended family members (e.g. Domestic abuse incidents, missing persons reports)
- ✓ obtain details of any threats, abuse or hostile actions against the young person
- ✓ created a restricted entry within force intelligence system 'Guardian' and submit a crime report where appropriate
- ✓ explain the options available to the young person, including who you will need to contact (Children's Social Care) and why.

## **14.3 Allegation by Third Party**

14.3.1 It is likely that the police will receive allegations from third party's regarding a young person being taken overseas for the purposes of being forced into a marriage. In these instances the following action should be taken

### **Action to be taken**

- ✓ collect as much information as required (see 'Prompts to ask and information to be gathered') including whether the young person is a British National
- ✓ ascertain if anyone else is aware of the situation and whether enquiries have already been made (contact Nextlink, Children's Social Care and CAIT)
- ✓ discuss the allegation with the Forced Marriage Unit

- ✓ refer the allegation to CAIT
- ✓ check missing persons reports (contact the Missing Persons co-ordinator and Safe Choices)
- ✓ obtain details of and contact details for the third party making the allegation try to dissuade them from making their own enquiries and acting independently
- ✓ consider contacting Children's Social Care and also Education Welfare Service to undertake relevant checks where this has not already occurred
- ✓ advise the third party that if the young person is being held abroad and they wish to return to the UK that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) can try to arrange for them to be repatriated (if the young person concerned is a British national)<sup>10</sup>
- ✓ only contact the overseas police or other organisation if advised to do so by the Forced marriage unit in order to arrange for the young person to be taken to a British Embassy or High Commission
- ✓ document any evidence that could be used to confirm the allegation and any related criminal offences
- ✓ provide details of organisations that could provide support to the third party making the allegation (See Appendix 1)

#### **Do not**

- x it is inadvisable to immediately contact the police or other organisation in the country the young person is currently staying or being held (this could place the young person in further danger)
- x do not if contacting the overseas police agree to speak to the young person over the telephone (This may be suggested by the family) the young person must be presented at the Embassy or High Commission (it is unlikely that the young person will be able to speak freely if they are being forced to marry and you cannot confirm that the person being spoken to is the young person in question)
- x contact the young persons family, friends or community members this could alert them to the enquiries and place the young person in further danger) only do so if specifically advised by the Forced marriage Unit
- x make direct contact with the relevant British Embassy or high Commission before having spoken to the Forced marriage Unit
- x speak directly to the young person over the telephone

14.3.2 Once a young person has left the United Kingdom legal options for returning the young person to the UK are limited. See 'Legal Advice' for advice regarding 'Wardship' and seek further advice from the Forced Marriage Unit.

## **15. Health**

15.1.1 Health professionals can be ideally placed to intervene early to assist a young person at risk from Forced marriage. Assistance can be provided by:

- being aware of the circumstances and possible signs and symptoms of forced marriage;
- offering practical help and assistance;
- providing information about rights and choices;
- referring the young person to Children's Social care, police and Nextlink.

---

<sup>10</sup>The FCO will ask whether young person, third party or trusted friend is able to cover the cost of repatriation though this will not be used to delay the process

- 15.1.2 A young person may present in a variety of locations provided by health services where it is possible to identify the risk of Forced Marriage:
- Hospital emergency departments (ED), rape crisis centres or genito-urinary clinics with injuries consistent with rape and other forms of violence including injuries consistent with domestic abuse;
  - dental surgeries;
  - mental health services, counselling services, school nurses, GP's with symptoms of depression or self harming behaviour as a result of forced marriage;
  - Family planning clinics or GP for advice regarding contraception/ termination (many women will be reluctant to have a baby as a result of a forced marriage);
  - midwifery services if there is a pregnancy.
- 15.1.3 An appointment or meeting with a health professional maybe the '**One Chance**' that presents to allow action to be taken to protect the young person from the risk of being forced to marry or to be able to leave a forced marriage. Many health professionals will be used to asking about sensitive issues when taking a social history as it is a routine part of their role. Others will be less experienced or confident to do so if you are in any way unsure seek advice from your safeguarding lead.
- 15.1.4 If any health professional is concerned in any way about the possibility or a suspicion of Forced marriage they should seek advice from Police (CAIT), Children's Social Care or the Forced Marriage Unit prior to any action being taken.

## 15.2 Disclosure of Forced Marriage

- 15.2.1 If a health professional receives a disclosure that indicates is a risk of forced marriage the following actions should be taken:

### **Actions to be taken**

- ✓ gather as much information as possible (see 'Prompts to ask and information to gather')
- ✓ maintain accurate records of what is said or done including advice given
- ✓ liaise with your agency domestic abuse/child protection lead
- ✓ if the young person does not want any referral to be made to police and/or children's social care you will need to consider whether this is in their best interest and you need to override their wishes in order that action can be taken for their own or their children's safety<sup>11</sup>
- ✓ if you do override the young persons wishes you must inform them that you have done so
- ✓ if there is any concern that a young person is at risk of Forced Marriage you must follow Multi-agency child protection procedures and refer to children's social care, where there is evidence or suspicion that a crime has been committed you should also contact the Police CAIT.

- 15.2.2 Some disclosures may be made immediately prior to the young person being taken overseas and there may not be the opportunity to take the necessary protective action to protect the young person from a forced marriage. In these situations health professionals should still collect as much information about the young person and where they are going as this may enable in assisting the Forced Marriage Unit to repatriate them to the UK.

### **Actions to be taken**

- ✓ Advise the young person not to travel overseas if at all possible;

<sup>11</sup> Information Sharing Protocol: [www.bristol.gov.uk/childreninformationsharing](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/childreninformationsharing) , see also NMC code of conduct S's 5.3 and 5.4 and 'Confidentiality: Protecting and Providing Information' GMC, (2004)

- ✓ refer immediately to Police CAIT, children's social care and Nextlink;
- ✓ try to keep the young person with you, if this is not possible (they have been accompanied to the appointment and the young person does not want to arouse suspicion) make an appointment for a future date with them and plan what action to take if she does not attend.

### 15.3 Third Party disclosures

15.3.1 There are circumstances when health professionals may be informed that there is a risk of a forced marriage to a young person. These disclosures could come from extended family, friends of a young person. Where a health professional receives a third party disclosure they should:

- ✓ collect as much information as required (see 'Prompts to ask and information to be gathered') including whether the young person is a British National;
- ✓ ascertain if anyone else is aware of the situation and whether enquiries have already been made (contact Nextlink, children's social care and police CAIT);
- ✓ discuss the allegation with the Forced Marriage Unit;
- ✓ refer the allegation to the police (CAIT);
- ✓ obtain details of and contact details for the third party making the disclosure try to dissuade them from making their own enquiries and acting independently
- ✓ consider contacting children's social care and also Education Welfare Service to undertake relevant checks where this has not already occurred
- ✓ **advise the third party that if the young person is being held abroad and they wish to return to the UK that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) can try to arrange for them to be repatriated (if the young person concerned is a British national)<sup>12</sup>**
- ✓ provide details of organisations that could provide support to the third party making the allegation (See Appendix 1)

### 15.4 Female Genital Mutilation

15.4.1 Some communities may consider FGM to be a requirement before a marriage. This may have taken place before the marriage when the young person was a younger child. Though it has also occurred just before a forced marriage taking place. Where there are concerns regarding FGM you should also consider the possibility that there will also be a Forced Marriage. Remember that FGM is illegal in the UK and it is illegal to take someone overseas for the purposes of FGM.

## 16. Education (Schools and Further Education)

16.0.1 All staff working in education establishments can be ideally placed to notice behaviours in young people that may indicate they have a problem which maybe related to Forced Marriage. All Schools and Further Education Establishments should seek to provide support and advice to all students regarding a variety of issues including domestic abuse, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.

16.0.2 Staff may become concerned that a young person is at risk of Forced Marriage due to behaviours that they are displaying or that have recently changed. Young people may seek advice and support of staff regarding their own concerns regarding going on holiday or visiting family, they may suspect that this is a ploy to get them married. Such concerns

---

12. The FCO will ask whether young person, third party or trusted friend is able to cover the cost of repatriation though not being able to do so will not be used to delay the process.

should never be dismissed and when they are raised this could be the 'One Chance' that occurs to act to protect the young person from Forced Marriage.

- 16.0.3 However, staff should be careful not to assume that because a young person from a particular community is being taken on an extended family holiday that this is due to the possibility that they are going to be forced to marry. Without establishing the full facts and as much information as possible from the young person in question this could cause considerable distress both to the young person and their family.
- 16.0.4 Schools should be especially vigilant with regards to young people in year 11 as the summer holidays are likely to be fairly extended for young people in this year group. Thus, providing an opportunity for the young person to be taken abroad for up to 2-3 months without the school or other agency being aware that this is the case.
- 16.0.5 If any Education professional is concerned in any way about the possibility or a suspicion of a Forced Marriage they should seek advice from Police (CAIT), Children's Social Care or the Forced Marriage Unit prior to any action being taken.

## 16.1 Guidance for Schools

### 16.1.1 Disclosure of Forced Marriage (By Student)

16.1.2 Young People attending school may choose to disclose information to a trusted member of staff, a Teacher, Learning Support Assistant or other staff. Any disclosure whether regarding Forced Marriage or other concern should always be discussed with the School Safeguarding/Child Protection Lead. They will assist and support the staff in taking the actions outlined herein. Where it is clear from a specific disclosure by a student that there exists a risk of Forced Marriage staff receiving the disclosure with the support of their Safeguarding/Child Protection lead should take the following action:

- (*Staff receiving the disclosure* - refers to the member of staff that the student has chosen to disclose their concerns regarding the Forced Marriage to).
- (*Safeguarding/child protection Lead* – Refers to the named individual within your school whom has lead responsibility for safeguarding or child protection they should always be informed of any disclosure from a student. It is possible that they may also be the staff the student has chosen to speak to, where this is the case they should ensure that they discuss the disclosure with a senior member of staff in the school and that they are supported in following the actions below).

#### **Actions to be taken**

- ✓ gather as much information as possible (see 'Prompts to ask and information to gather') (Staff receiving the disclosure);
- ✓ maintain accurate records of what is said or done including advice given (Staff receiving the disclosure);
- ✓ ensure that your schools safeguarding/child protection children lead/Headteacher remains fully informed (Staff receiving the disclosure), and;
- ✓ seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit (safeguarding/child protection lead);
- ✓ explain to the student the options available to them (see 'Consequences of Forced Marriage'). This should include a referral to police CAIT and children's social care. If the student does not want any referral to be made to the police and/or children's social care you will need to consider whether this is in their best interest and you may need to override their wishes<sup>13</sup> in order that action can be taken for their own safety (Staff receiving the disclosure, safeguarding/child protection lead);

**NB.** *if you do override the students wishes you must inform them that you have done so*

- ✓ check with police (CAIT) and children's social care whether there have been any concerns or incidents regarding the students immediate and extended family (Staff receiving the disclosure, safeguarding/child protection lead);
- ✓ if there is any concern that a student is at risk of Forced Marriage you must follow multi-agency child protection procedures<sup>14</sup> and refer to children's social care, where there is evidence or suspicion that a crime has been committed you should also contact the police CAIT (Staff receiving the disclosure, safeguarding/child protection lead).

## **16.2 Where the Student is going overseas immediately.**

16.2.1 Some disclosures may be made immediately prior to the student being taken overseas and there may not be the opportunity to take the necessary protective action to protect the student from a forced marriage. In these situations school staff should still collect as much information about the student (see 10. prompts to ask and information to gather) and where they are going as this may assist the Forced Marriage Unit to repatriate them to the UK. All information collated at this stage should be passed to the police (CAIT) and the Forced Marriage Unit.

### **Actions to be taken**

- ✓ Advise the student not to travel overseas if at all possible, clearly explain to them their options (Staff receiving the disclosure, safeguarding/child protection lead);
- ✓ refer immediately to police CAIT - steps can be taken by the police to monitor the travel and whereabouts of the young person, children's social care (Staff receiving the disclosure, safeguarding/child protection lead);
- ✓ if the student is a British National give them the contact details of the nearest Embassy or High Commission to where they are travelling to<sup>15</sup>(Staff receiving the disclosure, safeguarding/child protection lead);
- ✓ if they are not a British National advise the student to contact the Forced Marriage Unit to seek advice regarding reliable Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that could assist the young person(Staff receiving the disclosure, safeguarding/child protection lead).

### **Do not (Staff receiving the disclosure, safeguarding/child protection lead)**

- x ignore or treat any concerns you have or that are raised by a student as 'merely' a domestic issue
- x abrogate responsibility to follow up your concerns or allegations made
- x approach members of the students family (they may have siblings and extended family in the school also) this may alert them to your concerns and place the student in danger
- x attempt to be a mediator between the student and their family

## **16.3 When a student stops attending school**

16.3.1 All Local Authorities have a duty to identify all children not receiving a suitable education. This may become the case when a student has been on holiday and failed to return to school. They may have abruptly stopped attending school during term. There may be a number of reasons that this has happened. School staff should consider given the students history and individual circumstances (see 'Signs and Symptoms') the possibility that a Forced Marriage may have occurred. It is particularly significant if the student has ceased attending school during year 11. The period of time when the young person has completed any examinations can be significant and provide a 2-3 month 'window' wherein a forced marriage can be undertaken (see also 15.4 Female Genital Mutilation). Where the teacher

---

14 South West Child Protection Procedures: [www.swepp.org.uk](http://www.swepp.org.uk)

15. FCO Website: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/find-an-embassy/>

or other member of school staff suspects that a student may not be attending school as a result of Forced Marriage they should:

- ✓ discuss their concerns immediately with the Safeguarding/Child protection lead who will assist you in the following actions (do not attempt to 'investigate' on your own)
- ✓ try to obtain as much information about the student as possible
- ✓ establish if there is a history of siblings/extended family members being forced to marry
- ✓ consider speaking to the students friends (this may place the friends under undue pressure and should only be done with care),
- ✓ contact the Education Welfare Service or equivalent provision within your school,
- ✓ make a referral to the police (CAIT) and children's social care,
- ✓ contact the Forced Marriage Unit,
- ✓ consider whether there may also be a risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM<sup>16</sup>).

## **16.4 Further Education (or University/ Higher Education)**

16.4.1 The following guidance should be used where a student is under 18. Where a student is 18 or over then the Safeguarding Adults Team should be contacted and/or police Domestic Abuse Referral Team (DART) and Next Link.

## **16.5 Disclosure of Forced Marriage (By Student)**

16.5.1 Where it is clear from a specific disclosure by a student that there exists a risk of Forced Marriage staff in Further Education settings should take the following action:

### **Actions to be taken**

- ✓ gather as much information as possible (see 'Prompts to ask and information to gather');
- ✓ maintain accurate records of what is said or done including advice given;
- ✓ liaise with your establishments safeguarding children lead and seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit;
- ✓ explain to the student the options available to them (see 'Consequences of Forced Marriage'). This should include a referral to police CAIT and children's social care. If the student does not want any referral to be made to the police and/or children's social care you will need to consider whether this is in their best interest and you may need to override their wishes<sup>17</sup> in order that action can be taken for their own safety;

**NB.** *if you do override the students wishes you must inform them that you have done so;*

- ✓ check with police CAIT and children's social care whether there have been any concerns or incidents regarding the students immediate and extended family;
- ✓ if there is any concern that a student is at risk of Forced Marriage you must follow multi-agency child protection procedures<sup>18</sup> and refer to children's social care, where there is evidence or suspicion that a crime has been committed you should also contact the police CAIT.

## **16.6 Where the Student is going overseas immediately.**

16.6.1 Some disclosures may be made immediately prior to the student being taken overseas and there may not be the opportunity to take the necessary protective action to protect the

---

16 See 15.4 Female Genital Mutilation

17 Information Sharing Protocol: [www.bristol.gov.uk/childreninformationsharing](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/childreninformationsharing)

18 South West Child Protection Procedures: [www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)

student from a forced marriage. In these situations staff should still collect as much information about the student (see 10. Prompts to ask and information to gather) and where they are going as this may assist the Forced Marriage Unit to repatriate them to the UK. All information collated at this stage should be passed to the police (CAIT) and the Forced Marriage Unit.

### **Actions to be taken**

- ✓ Advise the student not to travel overseas if at all possible, clearly explain to them their options;
- ✓ refer immediately to police CAIT, children's social care and Nextlink;
- ✓ if the student is a British National give them the contact details of the nearest Embassy or High Commission to where they are travelling to<sup>19</sup>;
- ✓ if they are not a British National advise them to contact the Forced Marriage Unit to seek advice regarding reliable NGOs that could assist the young person

### **Do not**

- x ignore or treat any concerns you have or that are raised by a student as 'merely' a domestic issue
- x abrogate responsibility to follow up your concerns or allegations made
- x approach members of the students family (they may have siblings and extended family in the school also) this may alert them to your concerns and place the student in danger
- x attempt to be a mediator between the student and their family

## **16.7 When a student stops attending college/University or Further Education Establishment**

16.7.1 All Local Authorities have a duty to identify all children not receiving a suitable education. This may become the case when a student has been on holiday and failed to return to education. Or they may have abruptly stopped attending school during term. There may be a number of reasons that this has happened. College staff should consider given the students history and individual circumstances (see 'Signs and Symptoms') the possibility that a Forced Marriage may have occurred. Where the lecturer or other member of staff suspects that a student may not be attending college as a result of Forced marriage they should:

- ✓ try to obtain as much information about the student as possible
- ✓ establish if there is a history of siblings/extended family members being forced to marry
- ✓ consider speaking to the students friends (this may place the friends under undue pressure and should only be done with care),
- ✓ make a referral to the police (CAIT) and children's social care,
- ✓ contact the Forced Marriage Unit.

## **17. Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA)**

17.1 This guidance is designed for use in respect of Children and Young people under 18 years of age. Where there are concerns relating to anyone 18 and over you should contact the Safeguarding Adults team.

**Hotline number is 0117 903 1690**

Alternatively you can contact the team via email [safeguardingadults@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingadults@bristol.gov.uk)

---

19 FCO Website: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/find-an-embassy/>

You would need to contact the Safeguarding Adults team where a person 18 or over was at risk of harm.

## Appendix 1 - Useful Links and information<sup>20</sup>

### Ashiana

<http://www.ashiana.org.uk/>

We believe everyone has the right to live a life free of oppression, fear and violence. We are a charitable organisation based in London, to help women from the Asian, Turkish & Iranian community get help when they need it. We are here to offer our help support and guidance to Women in need.

### The Ann Craft Trust

0115 951 5400; [www.anncrafttrust.org](http://www.anncrafttrust.org)

Offers advice to professionals, parents, carers and family members on issues relating to the protection of vulnerable children and adults. You can contact them about general issues. They are also happy to give advice about specific cases. If they are unable to answer your question, they will try to find you the most appropriate person to talk to about your concerns.

If you have been abused and would like to talk to someone contact the Respond Helpline on 0808 808 0700.

### The Asian Family Counselling Service

020 85713933; [www.asianfamilycounselling.org](http://www.asianfamilycounselling.org)

A national service offering counselling on marital and family issues for Asian men and women. The national helpline: 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Telephone counselling is also available.

### Careline

020 8514 1177

A national confidential counselling line for children, young people and adults on any issue including family, marital and relationship problems, child abuse, rape and sexual assault, depression and anxiety.

### Child Line

0800 1111; [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

For any child or young person with a problem.

### Citizens' Advice Bureau

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Free, confidential and impartial information and advice on a wide range of subjects including

---

20. The contact information provided was correct at time of publication please inform BSCB if there are any changes to the information in this list.

consumer rights, debt, benefits, housing, employment, immigration, family and personal matters. For a list of branches, see “Citizens Advice Bureau” in the telephone directory.

### **Forced Marriage: Survivor's Handbook**

This book will give you useful and practical information to help you take control of your life and focus on the future.

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/2855621/survivors-handbook>

### **ForcedMarriage.net**

[www.forcedmarriage.net](http://www.forcedmarriage.net)

For young people facing forced marriage. It provides advice, information and essential contacts to help young people who fear they may be forced to marry or those who are already in a forced marriage.

### **FORWARD**

020 8960 4000; [www.forwarduk.org.uk](http://www.forwarduk.org.uk)

An African Diaspora led UK-registered campaign and support charity dedicated to advancing and safeguarding the health and rights of African girls and women, in particular female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced and child marriage.

### **Gatwick Travel Care**

01293 504283; [www.gatwick-airport-guide.co.uk/disabled-facilities.html](http://www.gatwick-airport-guide.co.uk/disabled-facilities.html)

This service ensures that young people are able to leave the airport and arrive at their destination safely and without delay. Victims of forced marriage may require assistance when they arrive at Gatwick and Travel Care can be contacted for advice. The service is available from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 4pm Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.

### **Heathrow Travel Care**

020 8745 7495; [www.heathrowtravelcare.com](http://www.heathrowtravelcare.com)

This service ensures that young people are able to leave the airport and arrive at their destination safely and without delay. Victims of forced marriage may require assistance when they arrive at Heathrow and Travel Care can be contacted for advice. The service is available from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

### **Henna Foundation**

02920 498600/496920; <http://www.hennafoundation.org/>

Operates a “one stop” service that works to meet and advance the needs, concerns and aspirations of Asian and Muslim children and families. It also assists voluntary, statutory services

and Government agencies to improve engagement and delivery of mainstream services. Henna Foundation hosts a National (multi-disciplinary) On-line Forced Marriage & HBV Directory and Knowledge Centre.

### Honour Network

0800 5999 247; [www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)

A confidential helpline providing emotional and practical support and advice for victims and survivors (male & female) of forced marriage and/or honour based violence and abuse. It provides advice and support to potential victims, victims in crisis and professional agencies.

### Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation

0207 490 0303 (9.30-5.00) or 07862 733511 (24hrs); [www.ikwro.org.uk](http://www.ikwro.org.uk)

IKWRO provides advice, support, advocacy and referral in Arabic, Kurdish, Turkish, Dari and Farsi to women, girls and couples living in Britain, in particular helping women facing domestic violence, forced marriage and 'honour'-based violence. Their mission is to protect Middle Eastern women at risk of 'honour' killings, domestic violence, forced marriages and female genital mutilation, and to support them in upholding their right to live without fear or oppression.

### Men's Advice Line

0808 801 0327; [www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk)

You can also email us: [info@mensadviceline.org.uk](mailto:info@mensadviceline.org.uk)

This service provides a freephone confidential helpline for all men experiencing domestic violence by a current or ex-partner. This includes all men – in heterosexual or same-sex relationships. The service gives men the chance to talk about what is happening to them and provides them with emotional support and practical advice. The advice line also has information about specialist services that can provide advice on legal, housing, child contact, mental health and other issues. The helpline is open Monday to Friday 10am – 1pm and 2pm – 5pm.

### MIND

0845 7660163

0208 5192122 (legal helpline); [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

MIND is a mental health charity working for a better life for everyone with experience of mental distress. Their services include a legal helpline.

### MixTogether.org

<http://www.mixtogether.org/>

**MixTogether.org** supports mixed couples (mixed race/ religion/ caste) who face opposition from family or community to their relationship.

We believe that you have the right to choose your own partner regardless of colour, race, creed

or caste, and that your relationship should be respected by both families.

### **National Domestic Violence helpline - Free phone 24 Hour**

0808 2000 247

Run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge.

### **Nextlink**

Next Link Domestic Abuse Services provide specialist a wide range of city wide services and safe temporary accommodation to women and children who have experienced Domestic Violence and Abuse. They have services in Bristol B&NES and South Gloucestershire. Services include safe-house accommodation, resettlement and outreach services and crisis response services. They have a specialist South Asian crisis response and resettlement/outreach services . They have a specialist Forced Marriage service with a South Asian support worker who is able to support young people who are at risk of or who have been forced to marry. They can also be contacted for advice and assistance.

Tel: 0117 925 0680

Mobile: 07793874979

Text phone: 07714290011

email: [enquiries@nextlinkhousing.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@nextlinkhousing.co.uk)

Web: [www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk](http://www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk)

### **NSPCC Asian child protection helpline:**

Bengali speaking advisor 0800 096 7714

Gujurati speaking advisor 0800 096 7715

Hindi speaking advisor 0800 096 7716

Punjabi speaking advisor 0800 096 7717

Urdu speaking advisor 0800 096 7718

English speaking advisor 0800 096 7719

This free, confidential service for anyone concerned about children at risk of harm offers counselling, information and advice. The service also connects vulnerable young people, particularly runaways, to services that can help. It is open Monday – Friday 11.00 – 19.00.

### **NSPCC**

0808 800 5000 (helpline)

0800 056 0566 (text phone); [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

This free, 24-hour helpline provides information, advice and counselling to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse.

### **Operation Paladin Team - Heathrow**

07747 055938

Practitioners may refer a child or young person to the Paladin Team at Heathrow for a wide variety of child protection issues. There may be concerns that a child or young person is an unaccompanied minor, an asylum-seeking child, being trafficked or about to be forced to marry. The team can be contacted directly on the above number. The service is available from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

### **Respond**

0808 808 0700 (helpline)

020 7383 0700 (admin line)

020 7387 1222 (fax line)

E-mail: [admin@respond.org.uk](mailto:admin@respond.org.uk)

[www.respond.org.uk](http://www.respond.org.uk)

Respond provides a range of services to both victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse who have learning disabilities and those who have been affected by other trauma. They also offer support and training to families, carers and professionals.

### **Reunite International Child Abduction Centre**

PO Box 7124, Leicester, LE1 7XX

0116 2555345 (admin line); 0116 2556234 (advice line); 0116 2556370 (fax line)

[www.reunite.org](http://www.reunite.org)

Reunite is the leading charity specialising in international parental child abduction. It operates a 24-hour advice line providing advice, support and information to parents, family members and guardians who have had a child abducted or who fear abduction. Reunite also supports and informs parents who have abducted their children and assists with international contact issues. Reunite's advice is impartial and confidential to one or both parties involved in an international parental child abduction case. Reunite also provides information and support on the issue of forced marriage.

### **Samaritans**

08457 90 90 90; [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

This is a 24-hour helpline that provides confidential support to any person in emotional distress.

### **Shelterline**

0808 800 4444; [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

This service provides emergency access to refuge services.

### **Southall Black Sisters**

020 8571 9595; [www.southallblacksisters.org.uk](http://www.southallblacksisters.org.uk)

This is a resource centre offering information, advice, advocacy, practical help, counselling, and support to black and minority women experiencing domestic abuse. Southall Black Sisters specialise in forced marriage particularly in relation to South Asian women. The office is open weekdays (except Wednesday) 10.00 – 12.30 and 13.30 –16.00.

### **Victim Support**

0845 30 30 900; [www.victimsupport.org](http://www.victimsupport.org)

Victim Support offers information and support to victims of crime, whether or not they have reported the crime to the police. All help given is free and confidential. You can contact Victim Support direct, or ask the police to put you in touch with your local group. The national helpline is open from 9am to 9pm Monday to Friday and from 9am to 7pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

### **Voice UK**

0845 122 8695; [www.voiceuk.org.uk](http://www.voiceuk.org.uk)

Voice UK is a national charity supporting people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable people who have experienced crime or abuse. They also provide support and advice to their families, carers and practitioners.

### **Women's Aid specialist domestic violence services**

[www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

There are nearly 370 organisations providing specialist domestic violence support services in England. The Survivors Handbook provides information for survivors in many different languages. [www.thehideout.org.uk](http://www.thehideout.org.uk) provides information for children and young people about domestic violence and it is interactive.

## Appendix 2 - Safety Planning Process

The safety and well-being of the young person at risk of or in a Forced Marriage is the priority for any action to protect them from Forced Marriage any action that would undermine their safety and well-being should be discouraged. The following Safety Planning process can also be used where a young person is in any abusive relationship.

Police (CAIT) should always be involved in any discussions and planning where a young person is wishing to leave their family of origin in order to escape a Forced Marriage. Arrangements for the young person to leave should be led by the police who have the means to ensure this can be done in a safe and secure manner.

### ***For the Young Person***

#### **Encourage the young person to think about the following:**

- Who could they go to in an emergency (extended family is not a good option to be encouraged this could place the young person at greater risk)
- all the things they may need to start a new life
- the possible finality of a decision to leave their family

#### **If the young person wishes to leave the family home, Do Not:**

- x rehouse locally (unless specifically requested to do so, by the young person and having considered and explained to the young person the risk involved in doing so)
- x if the young person has children, allow them to be accompanied by them if returning to family home to collect possessions

#### **The young person should be encouraged to:**

- ✓ contribute to the plan for their future needs and wishes
- ✓ open a bank account in their name
- ✓ leave copies of important documents (passport, national insurance documents and birth certificate) with Social Worker/Police, school or trusted friend (not extended family)
- ✓ spare clothing and cash with a trusted friend (not extended family)
- ✓ keep helpline numbers and emergency contact details close to hand
- ✓ have an emergency top-up for a mobile phone/alternative SIM Card

#### **Where the young person is leaving the family home:**

- ✓ if the young person **insists** on returning home to collect any belongings they must be accompanied by a social worker (if there is a possible risk of harm to the young person they should also be accompanied by a police officer)

***Remember personal possessions are important but are not as important as the safety of the young person, identity documents, bank account information, medication, immigration papers, jewellery and clothing can always be replaced.***

- ✓ if necessary ensure that an 'accredited' interpreter is also present (only use interpreters that are registered with the Police, Bristol City Council - Translating & Interpreting Service, NHS)
- ✓ an assessment of risk should be completed in respect of the young person and the staff involved
- ✓ ensure the young person is aware that to return home could place themselves and others at risk of harm

- ✓ ensure that arrangements to protect the young persons identity, benefit and other information are in place and adhered to by staff and the young person
- ✓ refer the young person to relevant support groups for ongoing advice and assistance
- ✓ does the young person want anyone to know they are safe and well (Who? Could doing so reveal their intentions or whereabouts placing them at further risk? What does the young person want the friend know?)
- ✓ Remaining in contact with family exposes the young person to continued emotional pressure and abuse the young person should be reassured that any attempts at contact by the family can be directed to the police or Children's Social Care
- ✓ families do make use of organised networks to attempt to locate and track down young people who have left home. These networks make use of family and community members, 'bounty hunters', taxi drivers and staff who may have access to records from benefit offices, GP surgeries, housing departments and Council offices

### **Do not rehouse locally**

When seeking to rehouse a young person in order to protect them from the risk of Forced Marriage it is important to minimise the risk to the young person in their new accommodation. This would be whether the accommodation is provided on an emergency basis or is more permanent. Careful consideration should be given to the location of such accommodation. Placing a young person in the same geographic area could maintain the risk to the young person from their families. However, many young people will find the separation from their families too much to cope with and may not wish to be moved a significant distance from their home.

### **For the Professionals**

All professionals involved in assisting young people to move to a place of safety should refer to their agency health and safety policies and risk assessments where there are concerns regarding a possible risk to them or colleagues.

### **E-Safety Advice**

Any young person who is being supported in leaving home due to forced marriage should be advised of the risks of using social networking websites, including e-mail and mobile phones.

#### **Facebook (and other Social Networking sites)**

Current profiles should ideally be closed down; being friends with family or friends at school will increase the risk to the young person of being located by extended family. Should a young person wish to retain their (facebook) profile they should be advised to change the privacy settings to restrict the possibility of anyone gaining access to contact details for them. *Photographs and anything that could be used to identify the whereabouts of the young person must be redacted.* How they access their account should be changed including the creation of a new e-mail address and password.

Further advice on removing accounts can be found in Account settings on Facebook.

- <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>
- <http://www.facebook.com/help.php?tab=safety>
- <http://www.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=help.safetytips>

Mobile phone numbers should be changed/a new SIM card issued. Assistance maybe needed by the young person in contacting their network provider.

### **Scenario A: Scenario for GP**

A Roma girl aged 14 has come to your surgery during a school day she has come alone. She is quiet and withdrawn. She is asking for advice about a vaginal irritation. You have seen her before and she is not usually this quiet.

You notice she has a ring on her left ring finger.

*Research in to the Roma community suggests that this would be a realistic situation and some girls would be married even earlier. The marriage service would be carried out by a village elder and although not legal would be recognised by the community as binding. There may be a dowry. Some couples will never go on to an legal wedding. There would be a wedding ring.*

### **Scenario B: Scenario for Clinic Treatment Room**

A family of 6 attend for vaccinations. They are going on holiday to Pakistan, they are staying for 6 weeks but they are leaving in 4 days time. The family consist of Mum and Dad, 3 girls and 1 boy.

The girls are aged 11, 13 and 15.

The boy is 10 years old.

The younger children are all really excited about the trip but the oldest girl is quiet. She asks to have her injections by herself in private. Her father is not happy and wants the mother to go into the room with you.

You explain the Girls need for privacy and you do the injection in a private room with her alone. She seems scared and looks at the door. She tells you she is being taken abroad to be married and she does not want to go. She is frightened she will not come home.

### **Scenario C: Case Study for use of local Safeguarding Procedures**

The following is a case study of a young woman facing a forced marriage.

A young woman aged 16 years old and had just completed her GCSEs. She lived in the midlands with her extended family. She became concerned about her future when her parents said she wouldn't be going back to study A levels in September. She knew that her older sister had been subject to a forced marriage and had been taken to Pakistan under the guise of a holiday to visit elderly relatives. She now suspected that she would suffer the same fate.

She had a close friend who advised her to leave home and stay with supportive relatives in another part of the country. She moved and her relatives referred her to a specialist agency.

The agency carried out an assessment of her needs and immediate risks to her safety. She liked where was staying but worried that her Parents would quickly find out where she was and so she asked to be moved. The agency moved her into a local safehouse. The safehouse made a referral to Children and Young People's Services under the local safeguarding procedures. Her parents reported her as a missing person. The Police interviewed her to determine whether returning home was in her best interest. There was a strategy meeting (which included the Police) and it was decided to keep her whereabouts confidential from her parents. A specialist worker met with her and explained ways of keeping safe and helped her with continuing her education.

She is still living in the safehouse, but intends to return to her supportive relatives when it is safe to do so. She does not intend to return to the family home.

### **Scenario D: Scenario for School Health Nurse**

Yasmina is 15 years of age. She comes to the School Health Nurse Drop In Clinic at school complaining of headaches and stomach pains. After discussing the medical issues the School Health Nurse asks if Yasmina is worried about anything in particular. Yasmina discloses that she thinks she is going to be married off to her Mother's cousin in Pakistan. The family are getting ready to go to Pakistan during the Summer holidays. Yasmina says this happened to her older cousin. The School Health Nurses ask Yasmina if this is what she wants. Yasmina says no, she has a boyfriend already in the U.K.

#### **ACTIONS:**

- Reassure Yasmina of confidentiality issues.
- Do not contact the family.
- Do a risk assessment.
- Get all details about the family i.e. names, dates of birth, dates, travel details and addresses.
- Discuss with Safeguarding Lead for advice on contacting the Forced Marriage Unit and referral to CYPS.

If possible see Yasmina again in school on her own.

### **Scenario E: Education 1**

A 13 year old girl in your tutor group returns to school after two weeks of absence. The school attendance officer followed up the absence after a couple of days as there had been no message from the parents – she got back to you saying “there were big family problems”. With no more detail, you just accepted this.

The girl clearly looks very miserable and unusually untidy. She avoids eye contact with you. You feel unsure about what to do, clearly something is wrong, but you don't want to draw any attention to her and she seems to want to be left alone.

Later in the day a group of girls approach you and tell you that the girl wants to talk to you. They seem to be very concerned about her and have encouraged her to come and see you.

When you sit down quietly together, reluctantly she begins to explain that for the last two weeks she has been living with her sister because she ran away from home. She found out her parents were planning to take her to Pakistan and force her to marry. Her family found out where she was and her older brothers came round and tried to force the door. There had also been threatening telephone calls.

Whilst she is telling you this story she becomes very distressed and you notice that her wrists are bandaged. She admits she has been self-harming.

### **Scenario F: Education 2**

Ranjit is a pupil at your school. He was born in Birmingham and has lived all his life in England. You receive a holiday form from his parents requesting time off school to visit Pakistan as his grandmother is unwell.

Ranjit tells you he is worried he is being taken to Pakistan to marry against his wishes. He reveals that he has been engaged since he was 7 to a girl he has never met. The family held a huge party – he had no idea at the time, this was to celebrate his engagement.

The pressure from the family to marry this girl has grown stronger as Ranjit has grown older. The family are determined this marriage will take place and say Ranjit will bring shame on the whole family if he refuses. Ranjit is really worried what will happen on this visit to Pakistan.

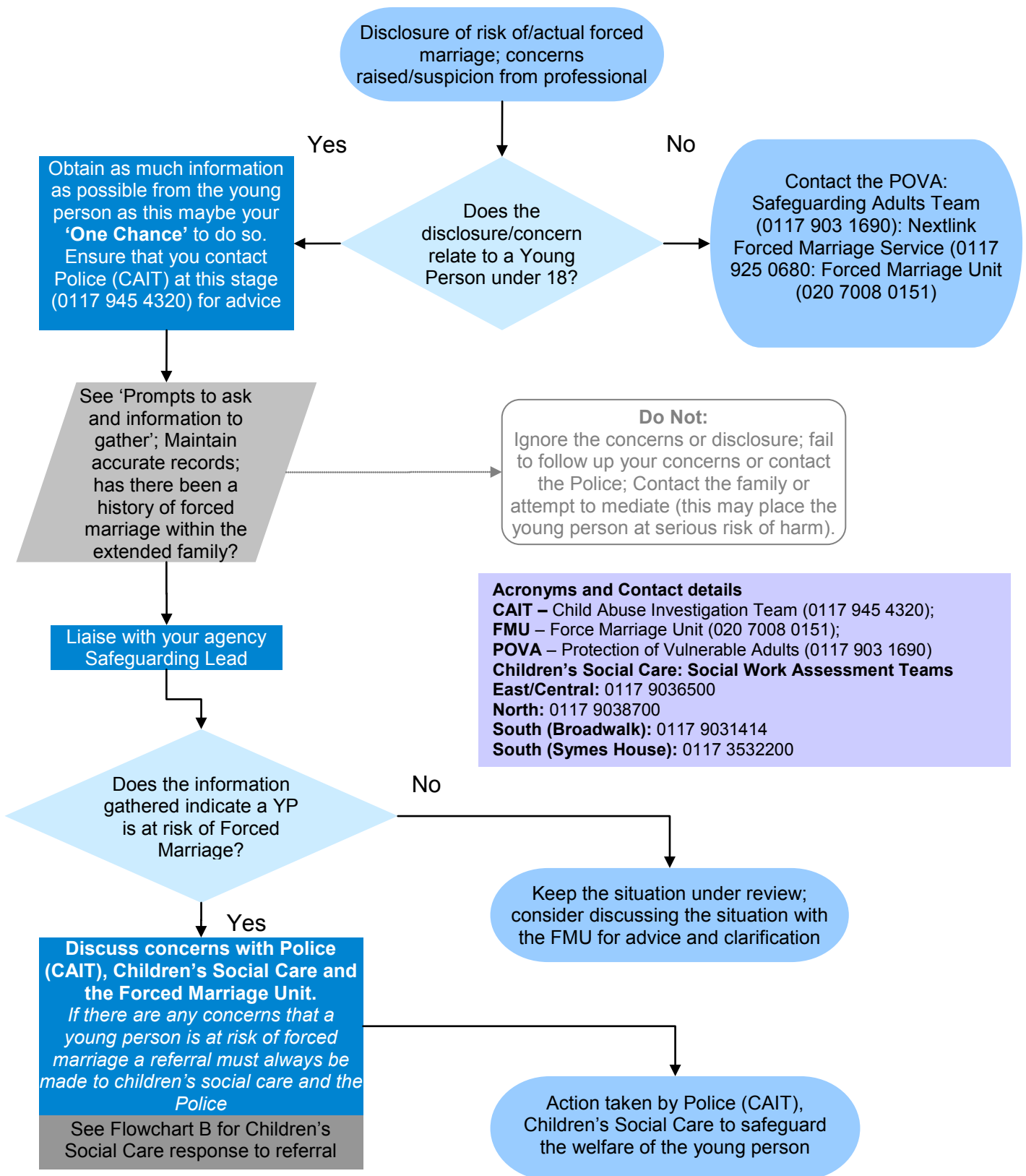
**Scenario G: Health Visitor**

Farruk is a 17 year old British born national of Afghan descent who the Health Visitor is visiting at home for a primary visit following the birth of her first child. The midwife has had concerns because Faruk appears low and her parents have always been present at her antenatal appointments. Faruk is married to an Afghani man who is 12 years her senior. The midwife believes this may have been a forced marriage but has been unable to establish this. Faruk has two younger siblings who are aged 13 years and 15 years of age. There is a concern that these girls may become victims of forced marriages.

The visit is difficult because Faruk's husband is present, however the Health Visitor manages to get him out of the room with the pretext of discussing breastfeeding. During this time she is able to devise a safety plan and discuss personal safety advice. Also she has spoken to Faruk about the options available to her, refer her and her siblings to the Forced Marriage Unit, refer her with her consent to appropriate local and national support groups, counselling services and women's groups.

You organise a G.P. appointment with a pretext of discussing the breast feeding problems so that Faruk will be able to talk openly without her family being present

# Flowchart A: Multi-Agency management of allegations of 'Forced Marriage'



# Flowchart B: Children's Social Care management of allegations of 'Forced Marriage'

