



Forced Marriage

Forced Marriage is illegal AND a form of abuse, therefore should be dealt with as part of existing child and adult safeguarding/protection structures, policies and procedures.

Forcing someone to marry another person became a criminal offence under the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 last year.

Definition: A forced marriage is where one or both parties do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used.

Are you concerned?

Where a child is at imminent risk of harm call the police 999, for example you believe the child is due to leave the country for a Forced marriage in the next 48 hours.

Call the police on
999

Where you have concerns that a child maybe forced to marry but this is not imminent.

Call the children's
helpdesk on
01452 426565

Forced marriage can affect girls and boys, the Forced Marriage Unit have dealt with cases from as young as 5 years old.

The following are some of the indicators, non-exhaustive list, to look out for where a Forced Marriage maybe about to take place soon

Absence and persistent absence

Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin

Fear about forthcoming school holidays

Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school/college

Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality

Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility

Not allowed to attend extra curricular activities

Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger

Prevented from going on to further/higher education

TOP TIPS

- Follow child protection process with any concerns relating to this harmful practice/crime. **There is a DUTY to all professionals to act to safeguard girls at risk**
- Use of interpreters- do not use family members or anyone who may know the individual in question or have any influence in the person's community. Interpreters must be sought very carefully, have the appropriate training about FGM but must not be connected to the local community.
- Do not focus on cultural sensitivity by using a worker from the same culture as the individual. Focus on the safeguarding of the individual like any other child protection matter.



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