

Children's Services Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage and FGM Procedure

(Harmful Traditional Practices)

Version v3

About this document

Title	Honour based abuse, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage procedure
Purpose	To set out the procedure for Children’s Social Care on the referral of a child or young person subject to Honour Based Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
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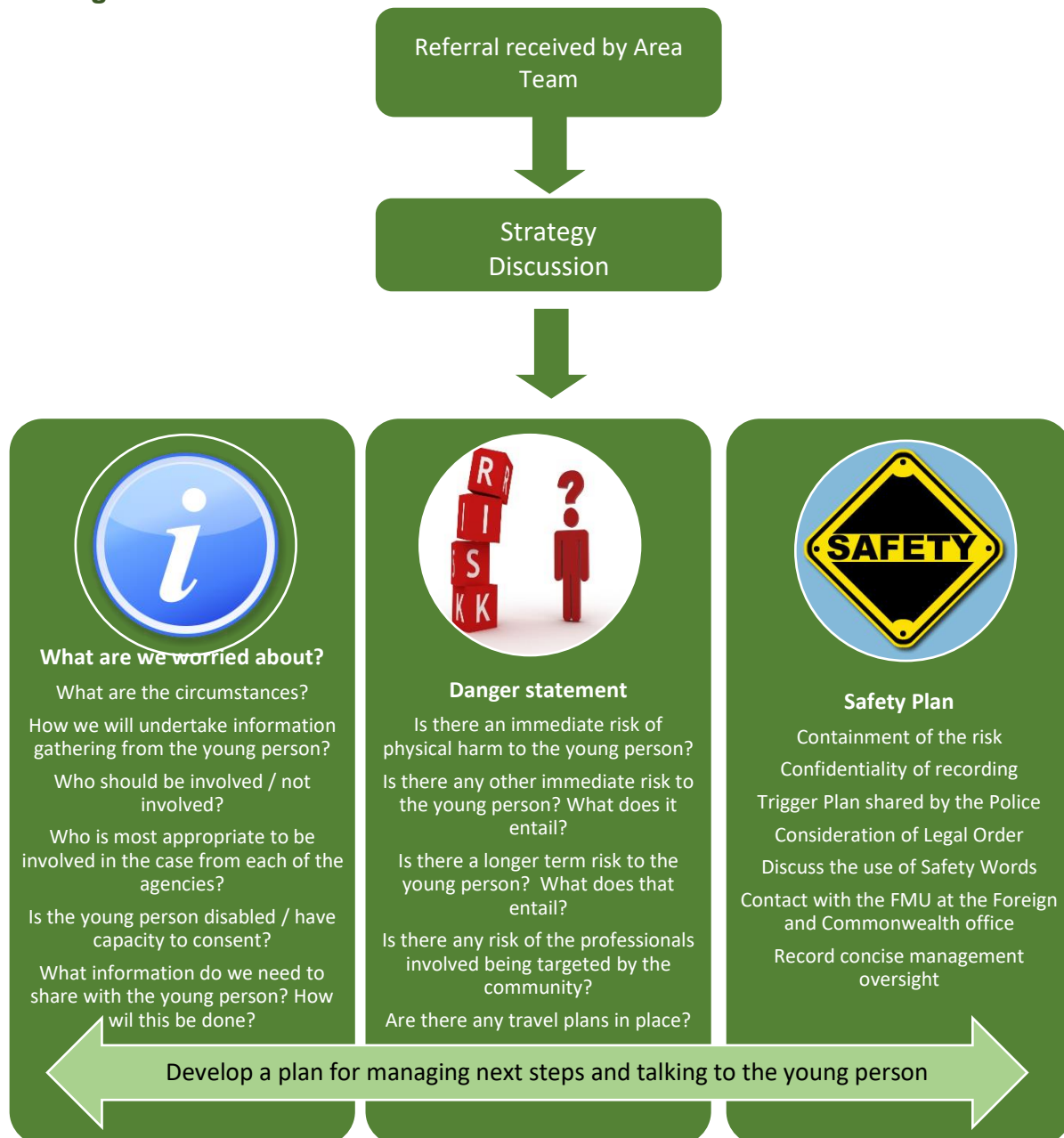
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Managing referrals in relation to Honour Based Abuse, FGM and Forced Marriage – Quick Reference



“One chance rule”
 Response to the young person and key information capture (see sections 5 and 10 of [Practice Guidance*](#)), safety words identified and police obtain photos / DNA

*Forced Marriage Unit
020 7008 0151
fm@fco.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/forced-marriage
 Out of hours: Global Response Centre **020 7008 1500**

Complete the C&F recording the risks and mitigating actions carried out –
DO NOT involve the family

Follow up only when / if the young person is willing / able and once a code-word has been established

Introduction

This guidance explains how Surrey Staff respond to incidents where Honour Based Violence/Abuse [HBV/A] and Forced Marriage is a real or suspected risk.

The advice and guidance within the document is intended to promote a victim focused approach and response to incidents of HBA, FGM and Forced Marriage reflecting national guidance and best practice.

Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage is not something which solely affects women which is why practitioners must be open to listening to anyone who claims that they have been a victim of it, using victim based approach and the 'One chance rule'.

In many cultures and religions, parents and relatives arrange the marriages of their children and facilitate the introduction of their children to their potential spouse. This relies on the consent of those to be married in freely accepting the marriage and each of the major religions requires this consent.

In some cases, however the young person does not or cannot consent and they are forced to marry someone under duress. This can be accompanied by other forms of violence and abuse, including female genital mutilation and honour based violence. Sometimes the young person is taken to another country, but this is not always the case and young people are sometimes forced to marry someone in the UK under duress.

This procedure sets out the social work response to referrals of potential forced marriage, female genital mutilation or honour based abuse. It establishes the definition and process to follow once a referral has been made.

See Also:

- [*SSCP Honour Based Violence Policy,*](#)
- [*SSCP Female Genital Mutilation Policy*](#)
- [*SSCP Forced Marriage Policy*](#)
- [*The Right to Choose: Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage*](#)
- [*Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage*](#)
- SSCP [*Domestic Abuse policy*](#)
- [*Female Genital Mutilation Risk and Safeguarding: Guidance for Professionals*](#)
- [*FGM Good Practice Guidance and Assessment Tool for Social Workers, National FGM Centre*](#)

Definitions

Honour

“Honour” in this procedure relates to the concept that the reputation and social status of an individual, family or community is based on the behaviour and morality of its members. It is deeply entrenched in families and is handed down from generation to generation.

Honour rules and behaviours are reinforced in families where men have the overall power and control which ensures that women and girls behave appropriately and their physical and sexual integrity is safeguarded. The concept of “honour” is usually defined and reinforced by the male head of the household / family

Any behaviour which is seen to bring dishonour, disrespect, humiliation, disgrace and shame, not only to the family members, but the community, ethnic or faith group can be taken out on the individual.

Behaviours, attitudes and actions that may constitute “dishonour” can include:

- Defying parental authority
- Dress, behaviour and attitude
- Sexual relationships / integrity behaviour before marriage, within a marriage, post-divorce or when a widow
- Use of drugs or alcohol
- Gossip
- Reporting domestic abuse
- Smoking cigarettes
- Running away from home
- Perceived inappropriate dress or make-up
- Rape, sexual harassment or assault (of the victim)
- The existence of a boyfriend or other “non-approved” relationships
- Pregnancy before or outside marriage
- Interfaith, intercaste or interethnic relationships
- Rejecting an arranged or a forced marriage
- Leaving a spouse and/or children
- Seeking divorce (particularly if there is a large dowry)
- Seeking child custody
- Bearing a female child/children
- Kissing, holding hands or other intimacy in a public place
- Homosexuality / transgenderism – being ‘outed’ or ‘coming out’ to others

Honour Based Abuse

“Honour crime”, “honour-based violence” or “izzat” cover a range of crimes including assault, imprisonment and murder where the person is being punished by their family or community. They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining the values and/or expected behaviour of the family or community.

In behaving contrary to what is expected, the person shows that they have not been properly controlled to conform by their family and this is to the “shame” or “dishonour” of the family. It is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or community

members. Victims may experience violence or abuse from multiple sources, including from people who may be respected or hold office in the community, not only in the UK but overseas as well. Dishonour can also be a trigger for forced marriage.

Whilst HBA has been associated historically with Asian communities, it can also affect Turkish, Kurdish, Afghani, South Asian, Malaysian and Indonesian, Middle Eastern, African, European and some Gypsy and Travellers communities. HBA can also occur in Plymouth Brethren communities and some Catholic or Christian cults. HBA can cross all cultures, nationalities, faith groups and communities and national and international boundaries.

The National Police Chiefs Council's definition (in the absence of a statutory definition) of honour based abuse is:

“an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse), which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour”

Coercive and controlling behaviour as well as domestic servitude are also crimes that can be included.

Consequences of damaged honour

The consequences for victims where 'honour' has been damaged or perceived to have been damaged can be extreme and can include:

- Exclusion by family and community.
- Feelings of shame affect interactions with family and others in community.
- Abuse and Violence.
- Honour killing
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the term used to refer to the removal of part of all of the female genitalia for cultural or other non-medical reasons.

It has NO medical benefits and health consequences can include severe pain; excessive bleeding, infections (including blood borne viruses such as tetanus, HIV, Hepatitis B and C), UTIs, fever, shock, swelling, injury to adjacent tissues, damage to other organs, fractures and dislocations as a result of restraint and even death.

Long term consequences include:

- Genital scarring, cysts and keloid scar formation,
- recurring urinary tract infections and difficulties in passing urine,
- increased risk of HIV and Hepatitis B and C,
- pain during sex and lack of pleasurable sensation and impaired sexual function,
- psychological issues – depression, anxiety, flashbacks, post-traumatic stress disorder,
- difficulties with menstruation (periods)
- Damage to the reproductive system, including infertility,

- Complications in pregnancy or childbirth (prolonged labour, bleeding, tears in childbirth, increased need for caesarean section)
- Flashbacks during labour,
- Risk of death to mother and child during childbirth.

It is practised because:

- It is falsely believed to be a religious obligation,
- It is believed to cleanse and purify a girl,
- It is perceived to preserve a girl's chastity and virginity,
- It is believed to make future child birth safer,
- It is perceived to uphold family honour,
- It is a custom / tradition of the family and/or community,
- It is perceived to be more aesthetically desirable,
- It is seen to be a rite of passage into womanhood,
- It is thought to make the girl more marriageable,

Families and victims of FGM often do not associate the long term consequences to FGM so it is about educating. Those who have been subjected to it, believe their families have good intentions therefore cannot or associate with the term mutilation so to be sensitive to this when seeking disclosures.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In cases of vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent to marriage, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

It is illegal to threaten or coerce someone into marriage in the UK and it is also an offence to force a UK citizen to marry someone abroad.

The UK 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 is a criminal offence.**

It can happen to both women and men, although many of the reported cases involve young women and girls aged between 16 and 25. There is no "typical" victim of forced marriage. Some may be over or under 18 years of age, some may have a disability, some may have young children and some may also be spouses from overseas.

The majority of cases reported to the Forced Marriage Unit have involved South Asian countries, however there have also been numerous cases in recent years involving many other countries across the Middle East, Europe, Africa and North America. A number of forced marriages do take place in the UK without any form of overseas element, while a large number of others also involve a prospective partner being brought into the UK from overseas or a British national being taken abroad for the purpose of a forced marriage.

It is helpful to explore this as victims may not perceive themselves to be in a forced marriage as they will think the 'arranged' marriage is a norm and expectation they have to live up to. It is when this is explored further by asking if they had a choice, and what would have been the consequences if they had said no to a particular suitor or did they feel they could not say no but had to go through with it, not because of any particular pressure but just because of the norm to conform. Remember

emotional pressure such as being informed their parent may have a heart attack if they do not agree to the marriage

Legislation

Honour Based Abuse

- There is no specific offence of "honour-based crime". It is an umbrella term to encompass various offences covered by existing legislation.
- Crown Prosecution Service direct HBA cases will be prosecuted under the specific offence committed e.g. common assault, inflicting Grievous Bodily Harm, stalking and harassment, kidnap, rape, threats to kill and murder. These crimes should be identified as "honour crimes". It is especially important to note the links between HBA and controlling or coercive behaviour.

Female Genital Mutilation

- The Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985 (FGM made illegal)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (also makes it illegal to undertake FGM abroad)
- Serious Crime Act 2015 (Introduced FGM Protection Orders, Mandatory Reporting Duty and parental liability, closing the loophole on girls who are habitually resident and anonymity of victims / survivors)

Forced Marriage

- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007.
 - Forced Marriage became a criminal offence in June 2014
- Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act (2014)
 - Forcing an individual to marry against their will.
 - Marrying an individual who lacks the capacity to consent to the marriage.
 - Taking someone overseas to force them to marry regardless of the marriage taking place.
 - Breaching a Forced Marriage Protection Order.
- United Nations Convention on the Rights Of the Child – Articles 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 19, 27, 37, 39, 40 and 42.
- Human Rights Act 1998.

The Anti-social behaviour, crime and policing Act 2014 makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry and it is also a criminal offence to breach a Forced Marriage Protection Order.

Section 121 of the 2014 Act states:

1. A person commits an offence in England and Wales if he or she-
 - a. Uses violence, threats or any other form of coercion for the purpose of causing another person to enter into the marriage, and
 - b. Believes or ought to reasonably believe, that the conduct may cause the other person to enter into the marriage without free and full consent
2. In relation to a victim who lacks capacity to consent to marriage, the offence under subsection (1) is capable of being committed by any conduct carried out for the purpose for

causing the victim to enter into a marriage (whether or not the conduct amounts to violence, threats or any other form of coercion).

3. A person commits an offence under the law of England and Wales if he or she- practices any form of deception with the intention of causing another person to leave the United Kingdom, and intends the other person to be subjected to conduct outside the UK that is an offence under subsection (1) or would be an offence under that subsection if the victim were in England and Wales.

“In addition to the specific offences of forced marriage, there are a number of other offences that may be committed in forced marriage cases. Perpetrators – usually parents or family members – may also be prosecuted for offences including fear or provocation of violence, common assault, actual bodily harm, grievous bodily harm, harassment, common assault, kidnap, abduction, theft (of passport), threats to kill, false imprisonment and murder. The Crown Prosecution Service is responsible for making the decision for which offence/s the perpetrator/s should be prosecuted. Sexual intercourse without consent is rape, regardless of whether this occurs within a marriage or not.” (p5)

A Forced Marriage Protection Order can be sought under section 4A of the Family Law Act 1996 which makes provision for protecting both children and adults at risk of being forced into marriage and offers protection for those who have already been forced into marriage. Local authorities may apply to the Courts for such an order through their Legal Services as can the police and other agencies / individuals.

The legislation also allows for ‘extra-territorial jurisdiction’ to be taken over both the coercion and deception elements of the new offences. Any of the prohibited acts carried out outside the UK by a UK national or person habitually resident in England or Wales, or to a UK national or person habitually resident in England or Wales, is an offence under domestic law and triable in the courts of England and Wales. It is also an offence under domestic law if the prohibited acts are conducted by or against a person habitually resident in England and Wales, but take place in Scotland or Northern Ireland.

The Children Act 1989 may also be used to protect children further through the application for a care or supervision order or wardship proceedings may be issued in the High Court. For children over 16 and who are Gillick competent we would also be able to offer them section 20 with Area Head approval. Police can also use their powers of protection at initial response/disclosure.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 applies to all people aged 16 and over. Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, whereas a family can make decisions on behalf of a person who is unable to because they lack capacity, this does not extend to the decision to marry. There is therefore no legal basis on which someone can agree to marriage, civil partnerships or sexual relations on behalf of someone who lacks the capacity to make these decisions independently. However, families sometimes do believe that they have the “right” to make decisions regarding marriage on behalf of their relative.

If a person does not consent or lacks capacity to consent to a marriage, that marriage must be viewed as a forced marriage whatever the reason for the marriage taking place. Capacity to consent can be assessed and tested but is time and decision-specific.

If a person is a British national and also holds the nationality of another country, they are considered to be a dual national. In some cases, this will mean that in the country of their other nationality the authorities there view them as being solely or primarily nationals of that country and treat them accordingly. Consequently, the authorities in that country will not recognise the British Embassy or the High Commission has any right to assist them and will not permit any assistance to be given.

Where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office considers there is a special humanitarian reason to do so, it will consider offering assistance to dual nationals in the country of their other nationality. Forced marriage is one of those circumstances where such an exception may be made.

Drivers (multi-agency practice guidance)

Perpetrators who force their children or other family members into marriage often try to justify their behaviour as protecting their children, building stronger families and preserving 'so-called' cultural or religious beliefs. When challenged on this practice, they often do not see anything wrong in their approach. The act of forcing another person into marriage can never be justified on religious grounds; every major faith condemns it and crucially, freely given consent is a prerequisite of all religions.

Often perpetrators are convinced that they are upholding the cultural traditions of their home country, when in fact these practices and values may have changed in their countries of origin. There are also others who are placed under significant pressure from their extended family to ensure their children or other family members are married. In some instances, an agreement may have even been made about marriage during their infancy.

Many young people will then endure their entire childhoods with the expectation that they will be made to marry someone of their parents or other family members choosing. What needs to be communicated to all of those at risk is forcing someone to marry is a criminal offence and that they have a fundamental human right to be able to choose their future spouse.

Some of the key motives that have been identified are:

- Controlling unwanted sexuality (including perceived promiscuity, or being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender) – particularly the behaviour and sexuality of women.
- Controlling unwanted behaviour, for example, alcohol and drug use, wearing make-up or behaving in, what is perceived to be a "westernised manner".
- Preventing "unsuitable" relationships, e.g. outside the ethnic, cultural, religious or caste group
- Protecting "family honour" or "izzat"
- Responding to peer group or family pressure
- Attempting to strengthen family links
- Achieving financial gain
- Ensuring land, property and wealth remain within the family
- Protecting perceived cultural ideals
- Protecting perceived religious ideals which are misguided
- Ensuring care for a child or adult with special needs when parents or existing carers are unable to fulfil that role
- Assisting claims for UK residence and citizenship
- Long-standing family commitments

Risk Factors

There is evidence to suggest that there may be factors that increase the risk of someone being forced into marriage, or being the victim of honour based abuse including:

- Bereavement within the family (occasionally, when a parent dies, especially the father, remaining parent or wider family members may feel there is more of an urgency to ensure that the children are married),
- When an older child (particularly a daughter) refuses to marry, younger female siblings are forced to marry in order to protect the family honour or to fulfil the original contract,
- If a woman or girl has disclosed sexual abuse families may feel that this has brought shame on her and by ensuring she is married may be the only way to restore “honour” to the family. They may also feel that marriage will put a stop to the abuse.
- A person may be at greater risk if they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual, as their wider family may feel that by forcing the individual into marriage either their sexuality or gender identity will not be questioned. Parents may also do so out of a mistaken belief that this will “cure” their son or daughter of what they perceive to be abnormal sexual practices.
- A young person with learning or physical disabilities. Parents sometimes worry that the young person needs someone to look after them long after their parents have passed away and won’t always be truthful with prospective partners about the nature of the disability. If the spouse has not been informed of the disability, it is questionable whether they have given informed consent to the marriage.

Potential warning signs

The chart below outlines some of the warning signs that may be evident in the behaviours of the young person. The list is not intended to be exhaustive and other signs of physical or emotional abuse may well be evident.

Chart of potential warning signs or indicators of forced marriage

These indicators are not intended to be an exhaustive list

<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality • Poor exam results • Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility • Removal from a day centre of a person with physical or learning disability • Not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities • Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger • Prevented from going on to further/higher education 	
<p>Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor performance • Poor attendance • Limited career choices • Not allowed to work • Unable to attend business trips or functions • Subject to financial control e.g. confiscation of wages / income • Leaving work accompanied • Unable to be flexible in their working arrangements 	<p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accompanied to doctors or clinics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self harm/ attempted suicide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating disorders • Depression / isolation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance misuse • Unwanted pregnancy • Female genital mutilation
<p>Family History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siblings forced to marry • Early marriage of siblings • Self harm or suicide of siblings • Death of a parent • Family disputes • Running away from home • Unreasonable restrictions e.g. kept at home by parents 	<p>Police</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victim or other siblings within the family reported missing • Reports of domestic abuse, harassment or breaches of the peace at the family home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female genital mutilation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The victim reported for offences e.g. shoplifting or substance misuse • Threats to kill and attempts to kill or harm • Reports of other offences such as rape or kidnap <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acid attacks

Referrals to Children’s Social Care

The One Chance rule

In many situations that are referred in to Children’s Social Care, there might be only ever one opportunity to talk to a victim or potential victim and to save a life. If the victim or potential victim leaves without the appropriate support and advice being offered that one chance may be wasted.

Managing referrals and next steps

(See Managing referrals in relation to Honour Based Abuse, FGM and Forced Marriage – Quick Reference Guide)

Partners have a duty to refer children to social care who they believe to be at risk of harm. This includes issues of potential forced marriage and suspected female genital mutilation.

When the referral is received, this is usually through the MASH. The case will be forwarded to the relevant Social Care Team and allocated to a social worker. With suspected honour based abuse, FGM or Forced Marriage, the social worker must presume risk in order to keep the young person safe.

The Team Manager must carefully consider who is allocated as a social worker. In usual practice, managers may allocate to a social worker who shares the same ethnicity, gender or cultural background, however in these cases it is advised that this may not be appropriate. Young people are far less likely to open up about their circumstances and there may be pressure on the worker to agree with the parents’ perspective or in some cases to divulge information, particularly if they are from the same community. This adds to the risk to both the young person and the social worker. Experience suggests that a ‘cultural fit’ is best avoided to allow the young person to feel more comfortable in giving information.

A strategy discussion must consider the following:

Information gathering	Risk	Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumstances • How we will undertake information gathering from the young person • Who should be involved / not involved • Who is most appropriate to be involved in the case from each of the agencies? • Are there any travel plans in place? • Is the young person disabled / have capacity to consent? • What information do we need to give the young person? How will this be done? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an immediate risk of physical harm to the young person? • Is there any other immediate risk to the young person? What does it entail? • Is there a longer term risk to the young person? What does that entail? • Is there any risk of the professionals involved being targeted by the community? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containment of the risk • Confidentiality of recording • Safety Plan must be identified (including potentially hiding a metal object on their person if being taken to another country) • Trigger Plan shared by the Police • Consideration of Legal Order (e.g. Forced Marriage protection order) • Discuss the use of Safety Words • Contact with the FMU at the Foreign and Commonwealth office • Develop a plan for next steps

Sometimes talking to the young person once, giving them the appropriate advice and support and then walking away from the case may be the only way to ensure their immediate safety, particularly if family or community members suspect that they have been talking to professionals. This gives the young person the confidence that they can approach the social worker again if they need to.

Following the strategy discussion take a victim focused approach:

- See the young person immediately in a secure and private place where the conversation cannot be overheard
- See them on their own (even if they attend with others)
- Reassure the victim about confidentiality where appropriate i.e. practitioners will not inform their family
- Maintain their confidence and DO NOT approach family or parents without express permission
- Reassure them that they are not going against their religion and/or culture
- Explain all the options to them
- Recognise and respect their wishes
- Perform a risk assessment – there are already a number of risk assessment tools available, including CAADA / DASH, however it will be best to use a tool as guided by your specific agency (in Surrey County Council the Child and family assessment is used)
- Contact a trained specialist at the Forced Marriage Unit as soon as possible
- Establish and agree an effective method of contacting the victim discreetly in the future, possibly using a code-word to confirm identity
- Obtain full contact details that can be forwarded to a trained specialist and that the young person has the contact details of this specialist
- Where appropriate, consider the need for immediate protection and placement away from the family

[...]

- Inform them of their right to seek legal advice and representation
- If necessary, record any injuries and arrange a medical examination
- Provide personal safety advice to the young person
- Develop and agree a safety plan in case they are seen i.e. prepare another reason why you are meeting
- Establish if there is a family history of forced marriage, e.g. have siblings been forced to marry in the past. Other indicators may also include domestic violence, self-harm, family disputes, unreasonable restrictions (e.g. withdrawal from education or “house arrest”) or missing persons within the family.
- Advise the victim not to travel overseas and/or discuss the difficulties they may face
- Identify any other potential criminal offences that may have been committed and refer to the police if appropriate
- Provide advice on the further service or support they should expect and from whom
- Maintain a full record of the decisions made and the reason for those decisions
- Information from case files and database files MUST be kept securely and preferable be restricted to named members of staff only
- Refer the victim, with their consent if over 18, to other recognised local and national support groups with a history of working with victims of domestic abuse and forced marriage.

Interpreters

If it is necessary to use an interpreter- always use a professional service [never use family or community members]. Ensure that the interpreter is not linked to the victims community in any way and it is good practice to seek the victims consent to use that interpreter. Ensure that the victim's

personal/identifying information is shared during the conversation. Consider with the victim if an alias/substitute name can be used to aid flow and clarity of conversation.

DON'T EVER:

- Send the young person away
- Approach members of their family or the community – unless it involves a learning disability victim and you need to work alongside the family in assessing capacity
- Share information with anyone without the victim's express consent
- Breach confidentiality – unless there is an imminent risk of serious harm or threat to life of the victim
- Attempt to be a mediator or encourage mediation, reconciliation, arbitration or family counselling

Information to be gathered

Given that there may only ever be one opportunity to talk to the young person, it is important that we can collect as much information as possible that will help keep them safe. Additionally, there will be information that we want to convey to them

SCREENING QUESTIONS

The following screening questions have been developed as a tool that can be used (not all of the questions may be relevant to the young person's situation):

- Who is the head / decision-maker of the family?
- What does honour/izzat mean to you and your family / in-laws?
- Are your family / in-laws concerned about what the community / extended family will think?
- Are boys/men treated differently to girls / women in your house?
- Did you/will you choose who your marriage partner will be?
- Have any of your siblings been forced to marry?
- What does your family believe are shameful behaviours? - identify 'do's and don'ts with the young person
- What do you regard to be safe or unsafe to disclose to your family?
- Do you have a dual passport or ID card for another country?
- Do you know what your visa status is (if applicable)?
- If you go abroad what is your estimated date of return? Who is likely to go with you? Where will you stay?
- How can we safely contact you?

Key information to be captured (where applicable):

- Details of the person making the report, their contact details, and their relationship with the individual under threat
- Obtain details of the person under threat including:
 - Date of report
 - Name of the person under threat
 - Nationality
 - Age
 - Date and place of birth

- Passport details
- School details
- Employment details
- Full details of the allegation
- Name and address of parents or those with parental responsibility
- National Insurance number
- NHS number
- Driving licence number
- Obtain a list from the person under threat of all those friends and family who can be trusted and their contact details
- Establish a code word to ensure you are speaking to the right person
- Establish a way of contacting them discreetly in the future that will not put them at risk of harm
- Obtain any background information including schools attended, involvement by adult or children's social care, doctors or other health services etc.
- Record details about any threats, abuse or other hostile action against the person, whether reported by the victim or a third party
- Obtain a recent photograph and any other identifying documents. Document any other distinguishing features such as birthmarks and tattoos etc
- Establish the nature and level of risk to the safety of the person (e.g. is she pregnant? Do they have a secret boyfriend or girlfriend? Are they already secretly married?)
- Establish if there are any other family members at risk of forced marriage or if there is a family history of forced marriage and abuse.

Information to give to the young person

The key information to give to the young person is how they can contact you or the police again safely. This will be agreed between the social worker / police and the young person without anyone else present and will usually involve some sort of codeword.

There are leaflets available to explain the work of the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) and the support they can give to young people including a number of organisations who can support those who have escaped from situations. It may not be possible when meeting with the young person to give leaflets as it could heighten the risk to them if they were found, however there are resources available that social workers should read and digest in order to convey the information when it is safe to do so.

Next Steps

The next steps in any case worked in Children's Social Care is to write up a Child and Family Assessment which clearly outlines the situation, the risk and the safety plan. This should be concise and, in a departure from the usual assessment process is unlikely to involve the family or be shared with them, in fact it is inadvisable and creates greater risk to the young person to involve the family in the assessment.

The child's record must be locked as confidential accessible to as few people as possible (the social worker, Team Manager / Service Manager). It must be flagged as high risk.

As and when the social worker is able to safely make contact / check-in with the young person (or generally the young person will initiate this), this must be clearly recorded on the records.

Managers must ensure that all workers are aware of the [Surrey County Council Lone Working policy](#) and apply it, particularly if they have cases involving Honour Based Abuse, FGM or Forced Marriage. Whilst the young person is primarily to be the likely target of abuse, it is not beyond the realms of possibility that staff involved with or who are seen with the young person may also be targeted. Particular attention must be paid where the member of staff is meeting with the young person outside of office hours.

Follow up after speaking to child or adult victim if unborn

Completion of Record of Outcomes – Section 47 Enquiries with a clear indication of level of risk.

Completed Child and Family Assessment – with clear indication of level of risk.

Discussion of outcomes with the victim – Still consider the danger of involving family/community [13.2]. The discussion must include explaining the options available [consequential conversation] [13.4] recording the victims sense and appreciation of the risk. This must be recorded in Record of Outcomes and Child and Family Assessment.

Discussion with the child with capacity what information can be shared with parents/family. 16+ assumed to have capacity for information not to be share. 16- should have their wishes respected not to share if they have capacity to make an informed decision [13.7]. The principle is that information should not be shared without the express consent of the person involved. The danger of honour killing family counselling, mediation, reconciliation and arbitration will place the child at significant risk [13.11]. This must be recorded in Record of Outcomes and Child and Family Assessment.

A multi-agency or complex strategy discussion should be convened to fully discuss the risks for victim, siblings and children in the wider family network and what outcomes and intervention should be considered. The following should be considered – Risks of convening a Initial Child Protection Conference, Should the child be removed due to level of risk- Legal advice and application for Orders [13.18][13.19], inherent jurisdiction should risk be high [13.20]. Immediate risk of Forced Marriage or Child going missing then application for a Forced Marriage Protection Order should be considered [13.17]. The discussion should also assess if it is safer for no intervention beyond engagement with universal services that can maintain ongoing contact without increasing suspicion or risk to the child. The case should close with clear caveat on Case Summary, Case Notes and Child and Family Assessment that information cannot be shared with family/community without express permission of the child [13.7].

Implementation and Monitoring

There is currently multi-agency training available through the Local Safeguarding Children Board which gives an overview of the issues in relation to Honour Based Abuse, FGM and Forced marriage. Whilst not currently compulsory, it is important for staff to attend this training and be aware that they may be allocated to work with a young person for whom this is an issue.

Understandably, the processes contained in this document are not intuitive and therefore Champions in the service can give further advice and support on the issues and processes to follow.

Social workers completing the Child and Family Assessment should check the box under ‘Factors identified at the end of Assessment’, ‘23A Abuse linked to faith or belief’ and record under ‘20 Other ‘Young person vulnerable to Honour Based Abuse and/or Forced Marriage and/or FGM’.

Further reading and resources

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (HM Government 2018)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (HM Government 2006)
- [Safeguarding Disabled Children: A Resource for Local Safeguarding Children Boards](#) (Council for Disabled Children 2006)
- [Children Act 1989 Guidance and regulations volume 1 Court Orders](#) (2008)

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-forced-marriage-protection-order>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/form-fl401a-application-for-a-forced-marriage-protection-order>

The Right to Choose: Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for Dealing with Forced Marriage, UK Government, June 2014. Available from:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322310/HMG_Statutory_Guidance_publication_180614_Final.pdf

Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines, Female Genital Mutilation, UK Government, 2014.

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380125/MultiAgencyPracticeGuidelinesNov14.pdf

Female Genital Mutilation Risk and Safeguarding: Guidance for Professionals, Department of Health, March 2015. Available from:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418564/2903800_DH_FGM_Accessible_v0.1.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/honour-based-violence-and-forced-marriage>

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/honour-based-violence-and-forced-marriage-guidance-identifying-and-flagging-cases>

<http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/FGM-Best-Practice-Guidance-for-Social-Workers-1.pdf>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/512906/Multi_Agency_Statutory_Guidance_on_FGM_-_FINAL.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/482528/Controlling_or_coercive_behaviour_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

<http://library.college.police.uk/docs/appref/Final%20NPCC%20HBA%20strategy%202015%202018December%202015.pdf>

Appendix A: Guidance from Surrey Police

Personal Safety Advice and Devising a Strategy for Leaving Home:

Leaving home is the most dangerous time for victims experiencing forced marriage or HBA. Therefore, if someone is planning to leave or the perpetrators may suspect they might leave, measures should be taken to ensure their safety.

Even if someone is not ready or willing to leave, they should still be advised of their options and helped with safety planning so they can take measures to protect themselves at home and make arrangements to leave home in an emergency.

The victim, with their consent, should be referred to local and national support groups.

Get the victim to think about:

- Who they could go to in an emergency?
- Who would be able to send them money if necessary?
- All the things they may need to start a new life.
- The possible finality of this decision and the ongoing lack of contact between them, their family and extended family (the reality of this may discourage victims to leave or if they have left, they may return; therefore ensure they are offered ongoing support).

When devising a strategy for someone over the age of 16 to leave home, they should:

- Be fully consulted as to their future needs and their wishes respected.
- Consider the risk to themselves and whether they should involve police.
- Open a separate/secret bank or savings account in their name.
- Leave copies of important documents such as passport, National Insurance number and birth certificate with police, social services or a trusted friend.
- Leave spare clothing and cash etc. with a trusted friend.
- Keep helpline numbers close at hand.
- Have a telephone card or change for urgent phone calls.
- Arrange alternative emergency accommodation should the need arise.

If the person is leaving the family home:

- Complete a safety plan before they leave the family home.
- Arrange for an escort e.g. a social worker or an outreach worker to accompany them if they insist on returning to the family home to collect their possessions.
- If necessary, arrange for an officer to escort them to collect their possessions; this is in order to prevent a breach of the peace or police can attend on behalf of the victim with a list of the items.
- Perform a risk assessment before visiting the family home.
- Advise the victim how their actions may compromise their safety.
- Take precautions to ensure that the person's identity, benefit and other records are confidential.
- Encourage them to change their bank account details and mobile phone so that they cannot be traced; this includes other social media accounts.
- Use existing domestic abuse measures such as personal safety alarms/TECSOS.
- Refer them, with their consent, to local and national support agencies.
- Use secure methods of transport i.e. not local taxi firms.

Personal possessions should include:

- Proof of identity (something with a photograph and signature e.g. passport, driving licence, student ID).
- Benefit books, money, cheque books, bank and credit cards.
- Medication and medical card.
- Address book, photographs, jewellery and clothing.
- Marriage/divorce papers.
- Documents relating to immigration status.

The victim to consider who they want told that they are safe and what information they want given out as well as amount of contact with their family they wish to continue without compromising their safety.

If the person at risk is going overseas immediately:

- A photocopy of their passport must be requested for retention. Where possible, encourage the individual to keep details of their passport number, including the place and date of issue. Ensure all passport details are obtained (consider dual nationality).
- Gather as much information as possible about the family – ensure this is gathered discreetly and needs to include:
 - Full name and date of birth of the person under threat
 - Father's and/or mother's name
 - Address where they may be staying overseas
 - Potential spouse's name (if known)
 - Date of the proposed wedding (if known)
 - Name of the potential spouse's father (if known)
 - Addresses of the extended family in the UK and overseas
- Information that only they would be aware of to confirm identity e.g. if the victim is a British National, another person of the same age and gender may pretend to be them at any subsequent interviews at an Embassy/British High Commission.
- Details of any travel plans and people likely to accompany them.
- Names and address of any close relatives remaining in the UK (this assists with serving FMPOs if one needs to be obtained).
- Safe means by which to contact them e.g. a mobile phone.
- Estimated return date. Ask that they contact you without fail on their return.
- Written statement by the person explaining that they want the police, adult or children's social care, a teacher or a third party to act on their behalf if they do not return by a certain date.
- Details of a trusted third party who may contact them whilst overseas or on their return.

Where overseas travel is unavoidable, the following precautions also need to be taken:

- Provide contact details of the agency and professional handling their case.
- Encourage the victim or potential victim to memorise a telephone number and e-mail address preferably those of the British Embassy or British High Commission (if a British National).
- If they are not a British National, advise them to contact the Force Marriage Unit who can provide details or reliable Non-Government Organisations overseas and the details of the Embassy of their own nationality.
- Advise they take a mobile phone that will work overseas and which they can keep hidden.
- Encourage them to provide you with details of a trusted friend/advocate in the UK who they will be keeping in touch with whilst overseas, who will act on their behalf, and whom you can approach if they do not return. Establish contact with the friend or advocate before the person under threat departs and request that the friend or advocate makes a written statement of support.
- Advise them to take emergency cash, in case problems arise in the country of destination, together with contact details of someone there they can trust to help them.
- Ascertain whether they are dual nationals, as they may have two passports. Remind them about the implications of dual nationality.
- Advise them to contact the Forced Marriage Unit.

- As a last resort consider advising them to place a metal spoon in their pants in order to trigger security alert at airport.

It is important to explain the options available to people facing forced marriage:

If someone fears they may be forced to marry, they have limited choices:

- To leave their family, start a new life and possibly have to remain in hiding but offer reassurance about other available support.
- To leave their family, start a new life knowing they face a life of ostracism and isolation but offer reassurance about other available support.
- To leave their family, start a new life and prosecute their family.
- To return to the family and hope the situation can be resolved.
- To seek legal protection.

If someone is already trapped in a forced marriage, they have limited choices:

- To stay with the marriage.
- To flee the marriage, start a new life and possibly have to remain in hiding **(will require lots of support and reassurance about available support)**.
- To leave their family, start a new life knowing they face a life of ostracism and isolation **(will require lots of support and reassurance about available support)**.
- To flee the marriage, start a new life and prosecute the family.
- Other issues such as having young children or younger siblings will affect the options available to them and this may limit their choices further.
- There may be serious risk of harm, especially for women, if they choose to return to the family or stay within the marriage.
- To leave and start a new life can make them extremely vulnerable. Their family or spouse may search for them through routes such as housing records, benefit records, employment records and health records. However, these records can be protected.
- For many people prosecuting their family is something they will not consider.
- If the victim is from overseas, fleeing the marriage and applying to remain in the UK is an extremely complicated process and requires professional immigration advice.
- For many victims from overseas returning to their country of origin is not an option. They may be ostracised, subjected to violence or even killed. These risks should be explained, even just to exclude this option.
- Many people, especially women, may be extremely frightened by contact with any statutory agency as they may have been told that the authorities will deport them and/or take their children away from them. Professionals need to be extremely sensitive to these fears when dealing with a victim from overseas, even if they have indefinite leave to remain or a right of abode as they may not be aware of their true immigration position. These circumstances make them particularly vulnerable.
- If it is discovered that they are in breach of immigration rules (e.g. an over stayer), remember they may also be the victim of a crime and be traumatised as a result. Do not allow any investigations of their immigration status to impede police enquiries into an offence that may have been committed against the victim or their children.
- Male victims of forced marriage may have difficulty in being taken serious. If they then wish to leave the family home, refuge accommodation tends to be limited for men so the use of hostels may be the only alternative.
- Some children and adults with learning disabilities are given no choice and/or do not have the capacity to give informed consent to marriage and all it entails. This may include engaging in a sexual relationship, having children and deciding where to live.

Appendix B: Specialist Support Agencies:

Forced Marriage Unit

A Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office initiative, the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is dedicated to preventing British nationals being forced into marriage.

[020 7008 0151](tel:02070080151)

From overseas: **[+44 \(0\)20 7008 0151](tel:+44(0)2070080151)**

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Out of hours: **[020 7008 1500](tel:02070081500)** (ask for the Global Response Centre)

fmu@fco.gov.uk

Karma Nirvana

This helpline is staffed by survivors of honour based violence and forced marriages so they understand the issues involved and can offer you support and advice. The Karma Nirvana Honour Network Helpline now has extended opening times. They are 9am – 9pm, Monday to Friday and 10am, 4pm, Saturday and Sunday.

The helpline is available to all victims, survivors, friends and professionals in need of guidance around honour based abuse and forced marriage.

[0800 599 9247](tel:08005999247)

www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Muslim Women's Network

A national specialist faith and culturally sensitive service for women in a crisis situation and need immediate help or just want information about their rights and the help and support that is available.

[0800 999 5786](tel:08009995786)

[Text on 07415 206 936](tel:07415206936)

www.mwnhelpline.co.uk

info@mwnhelpline.co.uk

Men's Advice Line:

Confidential helpline for men experiencing domestic violence from a partner or ex-partner (or from other family members). We help by: giving time; offering emotional support; providing practical advice; signposting to other services for specialist help.

[0808 801 0327](tel:08088010327)

www.mensadvice.org.uk

Ashiana Network

This organisation offers culturally specific advice, support and information to those at risk of or experiencing honour based violence or domestic abuse. They aim to empower the women and young people who use their services so that they are able to make informed choices and decisions about their future. They also provide two refuges specifically for South Asian, Turkish and Iranian women between the ages of 16-30 at risk of forced marriage.

[020 8539 0427](tel:02085390427)

info@ashiana.org.uk

www.ashiana.org.uk

Freedom Charity

Work together with the Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, police forces and the National Council of Women as well as other organisations. The 24 hour seven days a week Helpline and Textline are manned by trained professionals to help victims of forced marriage and their friends who are seeking help, support and advice.

0845 607 0133

text '4freedom' to 88802

www.freedomcharity.org.uk

True Honour

Sarbjit Athwal

Engage with Police and Agencies to gauge a better understanding of victims, to meet the needs of South Asian Communities. Help victims to 'break the silence' and seek help and get Justice. True Honour aim to go beyond our duty of understanding that a victim may have only 'one chance' to report/ask for help and we will make sure to go 'the extra mile' to deliver the support required.

07480 621711

contact@truhonour.org.uk

www.truehonour.org.uk

Southall Black Sisters

This is a resource centre offering information, advice, advocacy, practical help, counselling, and support to black and minority women experiencing domestic abuse, forced marriage and honour based violence. Southall Black Sisters also offer a specialised service for repatriated victims of forced marriage. The office is open Mon-Fri, 9am to 5pm

National helpline: **020 8571 0800**

Office: **020 8571 9595**

www.southallblacksisters.org.uk

Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation

Provides advice and support to Middle Eastern women and girls facing honour based violence, domestic abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

0207 920 6460

www.ikwro.org.uk

SHARAN Project

Run by South Asian experts, provides assistance on key life skills, information and advice on a range of issues including health, housing, employment, education, financial, legal and personal development, to support vulnerable women in their transition to independent living without fear.

0844 504 3231

www.sharan.org.uk

Bharosa

Is a domestic abuse service for ethnic minority women (particularly those from a South Asian background) living in Birmingham. A free service which is confidential and unbiased for women and young girls over the age of 16, who are experiencing any form of domestic abuse. The service is culturally appropriate and sensitive to the needs of the women that we support.

0121 303 0368 or **0121 303 0369**

www.mycareinbirmingham.org.uk/bharosa

Gatwick Travel Care

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.

01293 504283

travel.care@gatwickairport.com

www.rhuncovered.co.uk/gatwick-travelcare-helping-passengers-help

Heathrow Travel Care

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.

020 8745 7495

www.heathrowtravelcare.com

Halo Project

The Halo Project is based in the North East of England; supporting victims of honour based violence and forced marriages by providing appropriate advice and support to victims. The programme of work with key partners will also provide required interventions and advice necessary for the protection and safety of victims.

01642 683045

www.haloproject.org.uk

Reunite

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. It supports and informs parents who have abducted their children and assists with international contact issues. Their advice is impartial and confidential to either or both parties involved in an international parental child abduction case - it also provides information and support on the issue of forced marriage.

0116 255 6234

www.reunite.org

This firm has been used by Surrey Police to assist victims of FM, abandoned spouses / children.

0207 242 2556

mail@dawsoncornwell.com

www.dawsoncornwell.com

International Directory of Domestic Violence Agencies via internet search of (as provided by the Home Office FMU):

www.hotpeachpages.net