

Title:	Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence
Associated policies:	Safeguarding
1	Aims and Application
	<p>Northampton School for Girls (NSG) is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all students and creating an environment where they feel safe, supported, and valued. This policy outlines our approach to identifying, preventing, and addressing the risks of Forced Marriage (FM) and honour-based violence (HBV). These forms of abuse are incompatible with the school's ethos and values and are illegal under UK law.</p> <p>At NSG, we work collaboratively with students, families, and external agencies to protect young people from harm while respecting the diverse cultural backgrounds of our school community</p>
2	Scope of the Policy
	<p>This policy applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All students at NSG.• All staff, including teaching, non-teaching, and volunteers.• Parents and Carers.• Visitors and external partners delivering services or working on school premises.
3	Definitions
	<p>3.1 Forced Marriage (FM) : A FM is one in which one or both parties do not (or cannot) consent to the marriage and are coerced into it through physical, emotional, or financial pressure. Forced marriage is a criminal offense under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014)</p> <p>3.2 Honour-Based Violence (HBV): HBV refers to crimes committed to defend or uphold the perceived honour of a family or community. It includes physical violence, coercion, threats, and emotional abuse. HBV can overlap with forced marriage and other forms of abuse, such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).</p>
4	Legal Framework and Guidance
	<p>The contents of this policy is informed by the following legal and statutory frameworks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007: Legislation.gov.uk• Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014: Legislation.gov.uk• Education Act 2002 (Section 175): Legislation.gov.uk• Children Act 1989 and 2004: Children Act 1989 Children Act 2004• Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education (202): GOV.UK

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018):** [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/353623/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2018.pdf)

5 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL has overall responsibility for:

- **Ensuring staff are trained to recognise and respond to forced marriage and HBV:** The DSL must ensure that all staff receive appropriate training to identify and respond to signs of forced marriage and Honour-Based Violence (HBV). This includes understanding the cultural contexts and legal frameworks surrounding these issues.
- **Acting as the first point of contact for concerns and referrals:** The DSL is the primary contact for any safeguarding concerns or referrals, ensuring that these are handled promptly and appropriately.
- **Liaising with external agencies, including the police, social care, and the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU):** The DSL coordinates with external agencies to provide a comprehensive response to safeguarding concerns, ensuring that all necessary actions are taken to protect the child.

5.2 Staff

All staff are required to:

- **Be vigilant to the signs of forced marriage and HBV:** Staff must be aware of the indicators of forced marriage and HBV, as detailed in Section 6 of the guidance. This includes recognising changes in behaviour, physical signs of abuse, and other warning signals.
- **Report any concerns immediately to the DSL:** Any concerns about a child's safety or well-being must be reported to the DSL without delay.
- **Follow safeguarding procedures without attempting to mediate or investigate directly:** Staff should adhere to established safeguarding procedures and avoid trying to resolve the issue themselves, which could potentially put the child at greater risk.

5.3 Governing Body

The governing body ensures that:

- **Safeguarding policies explicitly address forced marriage and HBV:** Policies must clearly outline the school's approach to preventing and responding to forced marriage and HBV.
- **The school complies with statutory requirements:** The governing body must ensure that the school meets all legal obligations related to safeguarding.
- **There is oversight of training and policy implementation:** The governing body is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding training and the implementation of policies.

6 Recognising the Signs of Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Violence

6.1 Indicators of Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is a serious human rights abuse and a form of domestic violence. Recognising the signs early can help protect individuals at risk.

Key indicators include, but are not exclusive to:

- **Sudden withdrawal from education or decline in attendance:** A noticeable drop in school attendance or sudden withdrawal from education can be a sign that a young person is being prepared for a forced marriage.
- **Reluctance to discuss plans for holidays or family events:** If a student is evasive or reluctant to talk about upcoming family plans, it might indicate that they are being taken abroad for a forced marriage.
- **Expressions of fear about family or marriage:** Verbal or non-verbal expressions of fear or anxiety about family members or impending marriage plans can be a red flag.
- **Noticeable changes in behaviour, such as anxiety or depression:** Significant changes in behaviour, including increased anxiety, depression, or withdrawal, may signal that a young person is under pressure related to forced marriage.

6.2 Indicators of Honour-Based Violence (HBV)

Honour-Based Violence (HBV) is a form of abuse used to protect or defend the honour of a family or community. Recognizing the signs is crucial for safeguarding those at risk. Key indicators include:

- **Excessive family control or monitoring (e.g., being accompanied to and from school):** Overly strict control by family members, such as always being accompanied to and from school, can be a sign of HBV.
- **Evidence of self-harm or fear of family reprisals:** Signs of self-harm or expressions of fear about family punishment can indicate that an individual is experiencing HBV.
- **Reports from peers or staff of controlling behaviour by relatives:** Observations or reports from peers or school staff about controlling or abusive behaviour by family members can be a critical indicator of HBV.

7 Preventing Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence, and Increasing Awareness

7.1 NSG will deliver training for staff annually and provide workshops or assemblies for students to raise awareness of forced marriage and HBV.

- **Staff Training:** Annual training sessions will be conducted to ensure that all staff members are equipped with the knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to signs of forced marriage and HBV. This training will cover the legal frameworks, cultural contexts, and specific indicators of these issues.

- **Student Workshops and Assemblies:** Workshops and assemblies will be organised for students to educate them about the dangers of forced marriage and HBV. These sessions will aim to empower students with the knowledge to identify and report concerns.

7.2 PSHE Curriculum

The PSHE curriculum includes topics relating to **Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Violence**. Alongside this, additional relevant topics, such as **healthy relationships and consent**, will be incorporated into the curriculum.

- **Healthy Relationships and Consent:** The Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum will include comprehensive education on healthy relationships, consent, and the rights of individuals. This will help students understand the importance of mutual respect and the ability to make informed choices about their relationships.
- **Incorporating Real-Life Scenarios:** Lessons will include real-life scenarios and case studies to help students recognise and understand the signs of forced marriage and HBV. The aim of this practical approach is to make the information more relatable and easier to understand.

7.3 Partnerships with Agencies

The school will maintain strong relationships with local safeguarding boards, the police, and specialist services, including the Forced Marriage Unit.

- **Local Safeguarding Boards:** Collaboration with local safeguarding boards will ensure that the school is up-to-date with the latest policies and procedures related to safeguarding. This partnership will also facilitate the sharing of best practices and resources.
- **Police and Social Care:** Establishing strong links with the police and social care services will enable prompt and effective responses to any concerns or incidents of forced marriage and HBV. These agencies can provide additional support and intervention when necessary.
- **Specialist Services and the Forced Marriage Unit:** The school will work closely with specialist services, such as Karma Nirvana and the Forced Marriage Unit, to provide expert advice and support.

8 Procedures for Reporting Concerns and Responding

8.1 Reporting Concerns

If a student is at risk of forced marriage or HBV, the following steps must be taken:

1. **Immediate Action:** The staff member must notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. Prompt reporting is crucial to ensure the safety and well-being of the student. The DSL is trained to handle such sensitive issues and can take the necessary steps to protect the student.
2. **No Mediation:** The school will not engage in family mediation or inform the family [\(or anyone connected to the wider family\)](#) if it is deemed to increase the risk to the student. Mediation can sometimes escalate the situation and put the student at greater risk. Instead, the focus will be on ensuring the student's safety and confidentiality.
3. **Record Keeping:** All concerns must be documented accurately and securely. Detailed records are essential for tracking the case and ensuring that all actions taken are in the best interest of the student. These records should be kept confidential and only accessible to those directly involved in the safeguarding process.

8.2 Referrals

The DSL will take the following actions to ensure the student's safety:

- **Contact the local authority's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):** The MASH team brings together professionals from various agencies to assess and respond to safeguarding concerns. They provide a coordinated approach to ensure the student receives the necessary support and protection.
- **Liaise with the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU):** The FMU can be contacted at 020 7008 0151. This specialised unit provides advice and support to individuals at risk of forced marriage. They can assist with safety planning, legal advice, and other necessary interventions.
- **Ensure that all actions prioritize the safety and confidentiality of the student:** The primary concern is always the student's safety. All actions taken must be in the best interest of the student, ensuring their confidentiality and protection from further harm.

9 Staff Training and Support

9.1 Annual Safeguarding Training

All staff will receive annual safeguarding training that includes information on forced marriage and HBV.

- **Comprehensive Training:** Each year, staff will participate in safeguarding training sessions that cover the latest information on forced marriage and HBV. This training will ensure that all staff members are aware of the signs, risks, and appropriate responses to these issues.
- **Legal and Cultural Contexts:** The training will include an overview of the legal frameworks and cultural contexts surrounding forced marriage and HBV, helping staff understand the complexities involved.

9.2 Guidance on Identification and Response

Guidance on how to identify and respond to these risks sensitively and effectively.

- **Recognising Indicators:** Staff will be trained to identify the indicators of forced marriage and HBV, such as sudden changes in behavior, withdrawal from education, and signs of anxiety or depression.
- **Sensitive Response:** Training will emphasise the importance of responding sensitively to disclosures or concerns. Staff will learn how to handle these situations with care, ensuring the student's safety and confidentiality.

9.3 Ongoing Support and Resources

Access to ongoing support and resources to build confidence in handling complex cases.

- **Support Networks:** Staff will have access to support networks, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and external agencies, to seek advice and assistance when dealing with complex cases.
- **Resource Materials:** A range of resource materials, such as guidelines, checklists, and contact information for specialist services, will be made available to staff to support their ongoing learning and confidence in handling these issues.

9.4 Additional Updates

Additional updates as new guidance, or expertise, is available.

- **Regular Updates:** Staff will receive regular updates on new guidance, research, and best practices related to forced marriage and HBV. This will ensure that they remain informed about the latest developments and can apply this knowledge in their safeguarding roles.
- **Expert Input:** Training sessions may include input from experts in the field, such as representatives from Karma Nirvana or the Forced Marriage Unit, to provide deeper insights and practical advice.

10 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

While NSG is committed to maintaining confidentiality, it is essential to share information with appropriate agencies to safeguard the student. Decisions on information-sharing will align with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

10.1 Importance of Information Sharing

Effective information sharing is crucial for identifying and addressing risks to children. It ensures that all relevant agencies have the necessary information to provide timely and appropriate interventions. This collaborative approach helps in protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare.

10.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

Working Together to Safeguard Children provides statutory guidance on multi-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Key principles include:

- **Timely Information Sharing:** Agencies must share information promptly to ensure that children receive the support they need without delay.
- **Proportionality:** Information shared should be relevant and limited to what is necessary for the purpose of safeguarding the child.
- **Confidentiality:** While confidentiality is important, it should not prevent the sharing of information when it is necessary to protect a child. The safety of the child is the paramount consideration.

10.3 Data Protection Act 2018

The Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) provide a framework for the lawful processing of personal data. Key points include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lawfulness, Fairness, and Transparency: Personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly, and in a transparent manner.• Purpose Limitation: Data should be collected for specified, explicit, and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner incompatible with those purposes.• Data Minimisation: Only the data that is necessary for the intended purpose should be collected and processed.• Accuracy: Data must be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.• Storage Limitation: Data should not be kept for longer than necessary.• Integrity and Confidentiality: Data must be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unauthorized or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction, or damage.
11	Policy Review
	This policy will be reviewed as part of the statutory review cycle.
12	Key Contacts
	Lead DSL: Abigail Boddy, Deputy Headteacher: aboddy@nsg.northants.sch.uk Deputy DSLs: Claire Green, Director of Sixth Form: cgreen@nsg.northants.sch.uk and George Simmons, Assistant Headteacher: gsimmons@nsg.northants.sch.uk Forced Marriage Unit: 020 2008 0151 Local Safeguarding Board: http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/ Email: nscp@northnorthants.gov.uk