Muddy Boots Pre-School CIO

Child Protection - Responding to Safeguarding or Child Protection Concerns, including Whistleblowing

Review Date:	**SEE COMMITTEE POLICY REVIEW SCHEDULE**

Jubilee Drive, Walgrave, Northampton, NN6 9PH. Tel: 01604 781838
Ofsted URN: 2800521 Registered CIO No: 1207935

Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Elaine Allen - Pre-school Manager

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Molly Baxter - Pre-school Deputy Manager

Safeguarding roles

- All staff recognise and know how to respond to signs and signals that may indicate a child is suffering from or likely to be suffering from harm. They understand that they have a responsibility to act immediately by discussing their concerns with the designated safeguarding lead or the deputy designated safeguarding lead.
- The manager and deputy are the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead, responsible for co-ordinating action taken by the setting to safeguard vulnerable children and adults. The designated safeguarding lead is also responsible for liaising with local statutory children's services and with the Local Safeguarding Partnership.
- The designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (M.A.S.H)
- All concerns about the welfare of children in Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO, at home, or elsewhere should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead or the deputy designated safeguarding lead in their absence
- The designated safeguarding lead ensures that all educators at Muddy Boot Pre-school CIO are alert to the indicators of abuse and neglect and understand how to identify and respond to these.
- The setting should not operate without an identified designated safeguarding lead at any time.
- The line manager of the designated safeguarding lead is the Chair of Trustees of Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO.
- The designated safeguarding lead informs the Chair of Trustees of Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO about serious concerns as soon as they arise and agree the action to be taken, seeking further clarification if there are any doubts that the issue is safeguarding.
- If it is not possible to contact the Chair of Trustees, action to safeguard the child is taken first and the Chair of Trustees is informed later.

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- The Designated Officer (formally LADO) is the Local Authority Designated Officer and their contact details are:

  Andy Smith 07850 854309/Sian Edwards 07738 636449 /Francesca Hamilton 07712 718701

- Issues which may require notifying to Ofsted are notified to the designated officer to decide regarding notification. The designated safeguarding lead and designated officer must remain up to date with Ofsted reporting and notification requirements.

- If there is an incident, which may require reporting to RIDDOR the designated safeguarding lead immediately seeks guidance from the designated officer. There continues to be a requirement that the designated officer follows legislative requirements in relation to reporting to RIDDOR.

- Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO follows procedures of West Northants Council Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) for safeguarding and any specific safeguarding procedures such as responding to radicalisation/extremism concerns. Procedures are followed for managing allegations against staff, as well as for responding to concerns and complaints raised about quality or practice issues, through whistleblowing and escalation.

Responding to suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Emergencies:

If a child is in immediate danger, left alone or missing, we will contact the police and/or ambulance service directly on **999**.

If a child is at immediate risk, we will call M.A.S.H (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) on **0300 126 7000** and make a telephone referral, or online at https://nctrust.co.uk/report-a-concern-or-request-support/

Non-emergencies:

- If there is no immediate danger, we will need to establish the level of need and risk before we take action. Where guidance is needed, we will seek this through immediate contact with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (M.A.S.H).

Out of hours:

We will contact the Out-Of-Hours Service on **0300 126 7000**

Responding to marks or injuries observed

- If a member of staff at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO observes or is informed by a parent/carer of a mark or injury to a child that happened at home or elsewhere, the member of staff makes a

record of the information given to them by the parent/carer in the child's personal file, which is signed by the parent/carer.

- The member of staff advises the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible if there are safeguarding concerns about the circumstance of the injury.
- If there are concerns about the circumstances or explanation given, by the parent/carer and/or child, the designated safeguarding lead decides the course of action to be taken after completing the setting's Safeguarding incident reporting form.
- If the mark or injury is noticed later in the day and the parent is not present, this is raised with the designated safeguarding lead.
- If there are concerns about the nature of the injury, and it is unlikely to have occurred at the setting, the designated safeguarding lead decides the course of action required and the setting's Safeguarding incident reporting form is completed as above, taking into consideration any explanation given by the child.
- If there is a likelihood that the injury is recent and occurred at the setting, this is raised with the designated safeguarding lead.
- If there is no cause for further concern, a record is made in the individual child's chronology and Accident Record, with a note that the circumstances of the injury are not known.
- If the injury is unlikely to have occurred at the setting, this is raised with the designated safeguarding lead.
- The parent/carer is advised at the earliest opportunity.
- If the parent/carer believes that the injury was caused at the setting this is still recorded in the Accident Record and an accurate record made of the discussion is made on the child's personal file.

Responding to the signs and symptoms of abuse

- Concerns about the welfare of a child are discussed with the designated safeguarding lead without delay.
- A written record is made of the concern on the setting's Safeguarding incident reporting form as soon as possible.
- Concerns that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm are responded to immediately and if a referral to the Multi Agency safeguarding Hub (MASH) is necessary this is made on the same working day.

Responding to a disclosure by a child

- When responding to a disclosure from a child, the aim is to get just enough information to take appropriate action.
- The member of staff at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO listens carefully and calmly, allowing the child time to express what they want to say.
- Staff do not attempt to question the child but if they are not sure what the child said, or what they meant, they may prompt the child further by saying *'tell me more about that'* or *'show me again'.*
- After the initial disclosure, staff speak immediately to the designated safeguarding lead. They do not further question or attempt to interview a child.
- If a child shows visible signs of abuse such as bruising or injury to any part of the body and it is age appropriate to do so, the key person will ask the child how it happened.
- When recording a child's disclosure on the setting's Safeguarding incident reporting form, their exact words are used as well as the exact words with which the member of staff responded.
- If marks or injuries are observed, these are recorded on a body diagram.

Decision making (all categories of abuse)

- The designated safeguarding lead makes a professional judgement about referring to other agencies, including Social Care using the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) threshold document:
  - Level 1: Child's needs are being met. Universal support.
  - Level 2: Universal Plus. Additional professional support is needed to meet child's needs.
  - Level 3: Universal Partnership Plus. Targeted Early Help. Coordinated response needed to address multiple or complex problems.
  - Level 4: Specialist/Statutory intervention required. Children in acute need, likely to be experiencing, or at risk of experiencing significant harm.
- Staff at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO are alert to indicators that a family may benefit from early help services and should discuss this with the designated safeguarding lead, also completing the setting's Safeguarding incident reporting form if they have not already done so.

Seeking consent from parents/carers to share information before making a referral for early help (Tier 2/3*)

Parents/carers are made aware of Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO's Privacy Notice which explains the circumstances under which information about their child will be shared with other agencies. When a referral for early help is necessary, the designated safeguarding lead must always seek consent from the child's parents/carers to share information with the relevant agency.

- If consent is sought and withheld and there are concerns that a child may become at risk of significant harm without early intervention, there may be sufficient grounds to over-ride a parental decision to withhold consent.
- If a parent/carer withholds consent, this information is included on any referral that is made to the local authority. In these circumstances a parent should still be told that the referral is being made beforehand (unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm).

**Tier 2: Children with additional needs, who may be vulnerable and showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect; their needs are not clear, not known or not being met. Tier 3: Children with complex multiple needs, requiring specialist services in order to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their health and development and/or who are disabled.*

Informing parents/carers when making a child protection referral

In most circumstances consent will not be required to make a child protection referral, because even if consent is refused, there is still a professional duty to act upon concerns and make a referral. When a child protection referral has been made, the designated safeguarding lead contacts the parents/carers (only if agreed with social care) to inform them that a referral has been made, indicating the concerns that have been raised, unless social care advises that the parent/carer should not be contacted until such time as their investigation, or the police investigation, is concluded. Parents/carers are not informed prior to making a referral if:

- there is a possibility that a child may be put at risk of harm by discussion with a parent/carer, or if a serious offence may have been committed, as it is important that any potential police investigation is not jeopardised
- there are potential concerns about sexual abuse, fabricated illness, FGM or forced marriage

- contacting the parent/carer puts another person at risk; situations where one parent may be at risk of harm, e.g., abuse; situations where it has not been possible to contact parents/carers to seek their consent may cause delay to the referral being made

The designated safeguarding lead makes a professional judgment regarding whether consent (from a parent/carer) should be sought before making a child protection referral as described above. They record their decision about informing or not informing parents along with an explanation for this decision. Advice will be sought from the appropriate children's social work team if there is any doubt.

Referring

- The designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO or their deputy follows the LSP procedures for making a referral.
- If a child is believed to be in immediate danger, or an incident occurs at the end of the session and staff are concerned about the child going home that day, then the Police and/or social care are contacted immediately.
- If the child is 'safe' because they are still in the setting, and there is time to do so, the senior member of staff contacts the Chair of Trustees for support.

Further recording

- Information is recorded using the setting's Safeguarding incident reporting form, and a brief summary entered on a Child welfare and protection summary**.** Discussion with parents/carers and any further discussion with social care is recorded**.** If recording a conversation with parents/carers that is significant, regarding the incident or a related issue, parents/carers are asked to sign and date it a record of the conversation. It should be clearly recorded what action was taken, what the outcome was and any follow-up.
- If a referral was made, copies of all documents are kept and stored securely and confidentially (including copies) in the child's safeguarding file.
- Each member of staff/volunteer who has witnessed an incident or disclosure should also make a written statement on the setting's Safeguarding incident reporting form, as above.
- The referral is recorded on a Child welfare and protection summary.
- Follow up phone calls to or from social care are recorded in the child's file; with date, time, the name of the social care worker and what was said.

- Safeguarding records are kept up to date and made available for confidential access by the designated officer to allow continuity of support during closures or holiday periods.

Reporting a serious child protection incident using the setting's Confidential safeguarding incident report form

- The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for reporting to the Chair of Trustees and seeking advice if required prior to making a referral as described above.
- For child protection concerns at Tier 3 and 4** it will be necessary for the designated safeguarding lead to complete the setting's Confidential safeguarding incident report form.
- Further briefings are sent to the designated officer when updates are received until the issue is concluded.

** Tier 3: Children with complex multiple needs, requiring specialist services in order to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their health and development and/or who are disabled.

Tier 4: Children in acute need, who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm.

Professional disagreement/escalation process

- If a member of staff at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO disagrees with a decision made by the designated safeguarding lead not to make a referral to social care they must initially discuss and try to resolve, it with them.
- If the disagreement cannot be resolved with the designated safeguarding lead and the member of staff continues to feel a safeguarding referral is required, then they discuss this with the Chair of Trustees.
- If issues cannot be resolved the whistle-blowing policy should be used, as set out below.
- Supervision sessions are also used to discuss concerns, but this must not delay making safeguarding referrals.
- If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the LSCB escalation process.
- We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.

Liaison with other agencies and multi-agency working

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' is available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.

- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues and concerns about children's welfare, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of M.A.S.H, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and children's social care to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

Allegations against staff and persons in position of trust

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We differentiate between allegations, and concerns about the quality of care or practice and complaints and have a separate process for responding to complaints.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person living or working on the premises, which includes:
  - inappropriate sexual comments;
  - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Designated Officer (DO) to investigate and/or offer advice:

- If it is an emergency and we think that a child may be in immediate danger we will contact the emergency services directly by calling 999. If we need to contact the DO urgently during the evening, at night or at the weekend, we will call the out-of-hours team on 01604 626 938.
- If we have a concern about a child or young person, we will contact MASH on the following number: 0300 126 7000

  This is the MASH contact number for both West and North Northants. The MASH covers all of Northamptonshire but the contact line is hosted through West Northants Council. Upon initial contact, there will be a West Northants message. By choosing Option 1 then Option 1 again, the call will get through to the MASH.
- We can also report a concern online via Northamptonshire Children's Trust's website:
- https://nctrust.co.uk/report-a-concern-or-request-support/
- http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/worried-about-a-child-/
- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (unless advised by the DO that this is unnecessary due to the incident not meeting the threshold), as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by M.A.S.H in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and M.A.S.H agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families, throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Whistleblowing

Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO **will ensure that all staff are familiar with the whistleblowing procedure**

Making a disclosure in the public interest (whistleblowing) is essential for keeping staff and children safe in the setting and to ensure good quality practice across the setting. We are committed to safeguarding the staff and children in our care and supporting all staff to feel confident to raise any concerns they may have about the setting or practice at the setting. These individuals include permanent staff as well as casual, temporary or voluntary workers and work experience students. For any member of staff being made to feel like a victim, or intentionally isolated or excluded as part of the Muddy Boots Pre-School staffing team, this will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter. This type of behaviour by others will be considered intentional and of 'Gross Misconduct' in nature.

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to the settings formal complaints procedure. It is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the setting, which makes it safe and acceptable for employees and volunteers to raise, in good faith, a concern they may have about malpractice and misconduct.

The whistle blowing procedure must be followed in the first instance if:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject. This includes non-compliance with policies and procedures, breaches of EYFS and/or registration requirements
- an injustice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur
- the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered
- the working environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
- that information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding clauses has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed

There are 3 stages to raising concerns as follows:

1. If staff wish to raise or discuss any issues which might fall into the above categories, they should normally raise this issue with their manager/designated safeguarding lead.
2. Staff who are unable to raise the issue with their manager/designated safeguarding lead should raise the issue with the Chair of Trustees
3. After a concern has been raised, the manager will decide how to respond in a reasonable and appropriate manner. Normally this will involve making internal enquires first, but it may be necessary to carry out an investigation. This may include the involvement of outside agencies such as the Designated Officer (formerly LADO).

Whilst it is hoped that such disclosures will never be necessary, the setting management recognises that it may find itself in circumstances which are new to it. Each case will be treated on its own merits.

Managers' responsibilities

Managers notified of concerns under this policy are expected to:

- ensure that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the policy
- ensure that concerns raised are taken seriously;

• treat the matter in confidence, within the parameters of the case;

• where appropriate, investigate properly and make an objective assessment of the concern;

• keep the person raising the concern updated with progress, without breaching confidentiality;

• ensure that the action necessary to resolve a concern is taken;

• take appropriate steps to ensure that the employee's working environment and/or working relationship is/are not prejudiced by the fact of disclosure.

If an issue cannot be resolved and the member of staff believes a child remains at risk because the setting or the local authority have not responded appropriately, Ofsted should be contacted by email – whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or by phone on 0300 123 1231.The NSPCC have also introduced a whistle-blowing helpline 0800 028 0285 for professionals who believe that:

- their own or another employer will cover up the concern
- they will be treated unfairly by their own employer for complaining
- if they have already told their own employer and they have not responded

  Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO will ensure that all staff are aware of the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline

Any fabricated or malicious allegations will be dealt with through our disciplinary procedure
This policy can be read in conjunction with our policies for Safeguarding and Child Protection and Making a Complaint.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Staff should be alert to symptoms that would indicate that FGM has occurred, or may be about to occur, and take appropriate safeguarding action. Designated safeguarding leads should contact the police immediately as well as refer to children's services local authority social work if they believe that FGM may be about to occur.

It is illegal to undertake FGM or to assist anyone to enable them to practice FGM under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, it is an offence for a UK national or permanent UK resident to perform FGM in the UK or overseas. The practice is medically unnecessary and poses serious health risks to girls. FGM is mostly carried out on girls between the ages of 0-15, statistics indicate that in half of countries who practise FGM girls were cut before the age of 5. LSP guidance must be followed in relation to FGM, and the designated person is informed regarding specific risks relating to the culture and ethnicity of children who may be attending their setting and shares this knowledge with staff.

Symptoms of FGM in very young girls may include difficulty walking, sitting or standing; painful urination and/or urinary tract infection; urinary retention; evidence of surgery; changes to nappy changing or toileting routines; injury to adjacent tissues; spends longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet; unusual and /or changed behaviour after an absence from the setting (including increased anxiety around adults or unwillingness to talk about home experiences or family holidays); parents are reluctant to allow child to undergo normal medical examinations; if an older sibling has undergone the procedure a younger sibling may be at risk; discussion about plans for an extended family holiday

Further guidance

NSPCC 24-hour FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Government help and advice: www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation

Children and young people vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation

Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO has a duty to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of any child or adult at risk of being drawn into terrorism. LSP's have procedures which cover how professionals should respond to concerns that children or young people may be at risk of being influenced by or being made vulnerable by the risks of extremism.

There are potential safeguarding implications for children and young people who have close or extended family or friendship networks linked to involvement in extremism or terrorism.

- The designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO is required to familiarise themselves with LSP procedures, as well as online guidance including:
  - Channel Duty guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance
  - Prevent Strategy (HMG 2011) www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy-2011
- The prevent duty: for schools and childcare providers www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty
- The designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO should follow LSP guidance in relation to how to respond to concerns regarding extremism and ensure that staff know how to identify and raise any concerns in relation to this with them.
- The designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO must know how to refer concerns about risks of extremism/radicalisation to their LSP safeguarding team or the Channel panel, as appropriate.
- The designated safeguarding lead should also ensure that they and all other staff at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO working with children and young people understand how to recognise that someone may be at risk of violent extremism.
- The designated safeguarding lead also ensures that all staff at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO are aware of their responsibilities with regard to equality and inclusion and children's rights. The designated safeguarding lead should complete training and support staff to access the training as offered by local authorities or nationally for dealing with concerns that a child may be at risk of extremism and/or radicalisation.
- The designated safeguarding lead should understand the perceived terrorism risks in relation to the area that they deliver services in.

Parental consent for radicalisation referrals

LSP procedures are followed at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO in relation to whether parental consent is necessary prior to making a referral about a concern that a child or adult may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. It is good practice to seek the consent of the person, or for very young

children, the consent of their parent/carer prior to making a referral, but it is not a requirement to seek consent before referring a concern regarding possible involvement in extremism or terrorism if it may put a child at risk, or if an offence may have been or may be committed. Advice should be sought from line managers and local agencies responsible for safeguarding, as to whether consent should be sought on a case-by-case basis. Designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO is mindful that discussion regarding potential referral due to concerns may be upsetting for the subject of the referral and their family. Initial advice regarding whether an incident meets a threshold for referral can be sought from the relevant local agency without specific details such as names of the family being given in certain circumstances.

Consent is required prior to any individual engaging with a Channel intervention. Consent is usually sought by Channel partners, but LSP procedures should be followed regarding this.

If there is a concern that a person is already involved in terrorist activity this must be reported to the Anti-Terrorist Hot Line 0800 789 321-Text/phone 0800 0324 539. Police can be contacted on 101.

Concerns about children affected by gang activity/serious youth violence

Educators Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO are aware that children can be put at risk by gang activity, both through participation in and as victims of gang violence. Whilst young children will be very unlikely to become involved in gang activity they may potentially be put at risk by the involvement of others in their household in gangs, such as an adult sibling or a parent/carer. The designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO is familiar with the LSP guidance and procedures in relation to safeguarding children affected by gang activity and ensures this is followed where relevant.

Forced marriage/Honour based violence

Educators at Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO are aware that forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are forced into it and will act accordingly as detailed below. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the cases of some vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced. A forced marriage is distinct from an arranged marriage. An arranged marriage may have family involvement in arranging the marriages, but crucially the choice of whether to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Forced marriage became criminalised in 2014. There are also civil powers for example a Forced Marriage Protection Order to protect both children and adults at risk of forced marriage and offers protection for those who have already been forced into marriage.

Risks in relation to forced marriage are high and it is important that educators ensure that anyone at risk of forced marriage is not put in further danger.

If someone is believed to be at risk it is helpful to get as much practical information as possible, bearing in mind the need for absolute discretion, information that can be helpful will include things likes, names, addresses, passport numbers, national insurance numbers, details of travel arrangements, dates and location of any proposed wedding, names and dates of birth of prospective spouses, details of where and with whom they may be staying etc. Forced marriage can be linked to honour-based violence, which includes assault, imprisonment and murder. Honour based violence can be used to punish an individual for undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour.

In an emergency police should be contacted on 999.

Forced Marriage Unit can be contacted either by professionals or by potential victims seeking advice in relation to their concerns. The contact details are below.

- Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7008 0151
- Email: fmu@fco.gov.uk
- Email for outreach work: fmuoutreach@fco.gov.uk

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- The Children Act (2004 s11)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2015)
- Equality Act (2010)
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2018)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Care Act (2014)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2023)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG, 2015)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2008)
- Hidden Harm – Responding to the Needs of Children of Problem Drug Users (ACMD, 2003)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2024)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG, 2019 – updated 2024)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated 2025)
- Northamptonshire Thresholds and Pathways October 2022
- M.A.S.H. (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): MASH@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk
- Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership: www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk

Accident Record (Alliance Publication)

Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage (HMG 2014)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf

Developing an effective safeguarding culture in early years education (Alliance Publication)