

Forced marriage

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

An arranged marriage is not the same as a forced marriage. In an arranged marriage, the families take a leading role in choosing the marriage partner, but the choice of whether to enter the marriage is left to both people.

A marriage must be entered into with the full and free consent of both people. Everyone involved should feel that they have a choice.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical, emotional and psychological. Financial abuse can also be a factor. In some cases people may be taken abroad without knowing that they are to be married. When they arrive in the country their passport(s) may be taken by their family to try and stop them from returning home.

Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights, a form of violence against women and men, where it affects children, child abuse and where it affects those with disabilities abuse of vulnerable people.

If you or someone you know is being forced into a marriage, help and advice is available and must be sought. Please contact the School's Child Protection Officers or one of the contacts shown below.

Where to find help:

Lea Manor Child Protection officer

Ms A Vale valea@leamanor.luton.sch.uk

Telephone: 01582 652600

Police Emergency

Telephone: 999

Bedfordshire Police Honour Based Abuse Unit

Telephone: 101

Forced Marriage Unit – Foreign & Commonwealth Office

For those worried about being forced into a marriage or those worried about a friend

(Opening hours Monday – Friday, 9am-5pm)

Telephone: 020 7008 0151

Out of hours: 020 7008 1500

Email: fmf@fco.gov.uk

Website: www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

Luton All Women's Centre

Support and services run by women for women - (Opening hours Monday – Friday, 9am-5pm)

Telephone: 01582 416783

Website: www.lutonallwomenscentre.org.uk

Freedom Charity

Telephone: 0845 6070133

Text: 4freedom to 88802

Website: www.freedomcharity.org.uk

Get Freedom App for Android and iPhone

Karma Nirvana

Honour-based violence and forced marriage helpline - (Opening hours Monday – Friday, 9am-5pm)

Telephone: 0800 5999247

Luton Womens Aid

Refuge, outreach, drop-in, advice line - Telephone: 01582 391856

Domestic Abuse National Helpline - (24 Hour Line)

Telephone: 0808 2000247