

Schools Charter on Ending Harmful Practices

What is the Schools Charter on Ending Harmful Practices?

The Schools Charter seeks to encourage the delivery of high quality, safeguarding focused inputs on harmful practices across all Schools and Colleges. This is to promote a preventative approach to tackling these sensitive issues and inspire collaboration between stakeholders in education, police and third sector organisations.

The London Harmful Practices Working Group has developed the Schools Charter. This is a strategic multi-agency forum facilitated by the Metropolitan Police Service and brings together a myriad of third sector organisations, legal experts and key stakeholders from the criminal justice sector, health and education.

It is important to encourage and normalise conversations about harmful practices so that we collectively can identify and address vulnerability and ultimately prevent victimisation.

What do we mean by harmful practices?

Harmful practices cover a range of practices, not all of which are covered by current legislation. They can be traditional, re-emerging or emerging practices. From a policing perspective, harmful practices include Forced Marriage, Honour Based Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing and Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief.

According to the United Nations harmful practices are 'persistent practices and behaviours that are grounded on discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, age and other grounds as well as multiple and/or intersecting forms of discrimination that often involve violence and cause physical and/or psychological harm or suffering'.

How to use the Schools Charter?

The Schools Charter is a tangible and direct commitment from schools to promote the delivery of inputs in schools that address harmful practices.

The Charter principles can be incorporated into harmful practices lesson plans that are delivered by external providers or conversely, developed and delivered by school staff.

These principles are:

- Harmful Practices as a Human Rights violation and a violation of the Rights of the Child
- Health implications of Harmful Practices in its different forms
- Highlight the legal position in the UK relating to Harmful Practices
- Have a Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) focus
- Address issues regarding consent and capacity to choose (and the vulnerability of those who cannot consent)
- Are evidence based (for instance highlighting the prevalence of abuse)

The Schools Charter promotes the appropriate sharing of information via existing referral pathways to ensure.

Statutory and third sector organisations have clear protocols that address:

- What to do when safeguarding disclosures are made
- How they share information via existing local referral pathways
- How they share community information/intelligence with police

Organisations delivering inputs on harmful practices in schools are encouraged to sign up to the principles it promotes.

The Schools Charter is a framework that schools and external delivery providers can use as a reference point when developing or promoting inputs.

To support schools and teaching staff an online resource will be made available at www.theschoolscharter.co.uk. This seeks to:

- Outline the aims and objectives of the Schools Charter
- Download the Charter
- Access links to resources and specialist services

Why now?

From September 2020 Relationships Education for all primary pupils, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for all secondary pupils; and Health Education for all pupils will be compulsory.

HM Government has also been clear that, as part RSE for secondary pupils, schools include content on female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

The charter encourages schools to prioritise professional development and teacher training on harmful practices to empower teachers. It recognises the need for this to be in collaboration with the third sector and key stakeholders and that a response from the education sector in isolation would not be as effective.

Engagement will be voluntary, inclusive and build on existing protocols and prior learning of the rights for children.

It will further encourage adult participation especially parents, teachers, carers, communities and policy makers who have the responsibility to ensure that these rights are adhered.

Schools Charter on Ending Harmful Practices

NAME OF ESTABLISHMENT

Hereby agree to adhere to the
Harmful Practices Schools Charter

We are committed to reducing all forms of harmful practices to ensure our students are actively aware of their [human rights](#) under the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

We welcome the support of recognised local and national partners to address these issues throughout our schools PSHE, citizenship and curricular programmes.

We take a zero tolerance approach to all forms of Harmful Practices, including but not limited to: Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Child Linked Faith Based Abuse (Witchcraft/Spirit Possession and Breast Ironing).

We pledge to actively engage with recognised Third Sector Organisations to deliver Harmful Practices training that:

- Includes Harmful Practices as a Human Rights violation and a violation of the rights of the child
- Includes Health implications of Harmful Practices in its different forms
- Highlights the legal position in the UK relating to Harmful Practices
- Is focused on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Addresses issues regarding consent, capacity to consent (and the vulnerability of those who cannot consent)
- Is evidence based (for instance highlighting the prevalence of abuse)

We welcome feedback and evaluation of all inputs with the view of improving our services and sharing good practice

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF

HEAD TEACHER

Harmful Practices Schools Charter

Helpful Resources

In an emergency call the Police on 999 or 101 for non-urgent matters and always refer to your school's safeguarding policies and protocols.

HM Government: The Right to Choose:
Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322310/HMG_Statutory_Guidance_publication_180614_Final.pdf

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf

HM Government Forced Marriage E-Learning Package
www.virtual-college.co.uk/resources/free-courses/awareness-of-forced-marriage

Home Office FGM E-Learning Package
www.fgmelearning.co.uk/

Home Office FM E-Learning Package
[https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/resources/free-courses/awareness-of-forced-marriage](http://www.virtual-college.co.uk/resources/free-courses/awareness-of-forced-marriage)

Multiagency statutory guidance on FGM – HM Government 2016

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/746560/6-1914-HO-Multi_Agency_Statutory_Guidance_on_FGM_-_MASTER_V7_-_FINAL_-Amended081018.pdf

Mandatory Reporting of FGM – procedural information – HM Government 2015

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/573782/FGM_Mandatory_Reportng_-_procedural_information_nov16_FINAL.pdf

NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

Let's talk FGM

<https://www.letstalkfgm.nhs.uk/>

Harmful Practices Schools Charter

Helpful National Services and Organisations

Police Domestic Abuse Investigation and Safeguarding Unit (DAISU)

Call 101 (or 999 in an emergency) and speak to DAISU who have specially trained officers who deal with Honour Based Abuse.

Forced Marriage Unit

0207 008 0151

A government unit who can assist with individual cases offering support and advice to anyone affected by Forced Marriage. Can also arrange the safe repatriation of British Nationals who have been taken abroad.
gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

0808 2000 247

24-hour helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid & Refuge
nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk
for access to local FGM, FM and HBA specialist services.

28 Too Many (FGM)

Provides access to research on prevalence, information and resources relating to FGM.

<https://www.28toomany.org/>

National FGM Centre

Providing access to training, resources and toolkits relating to FGM.

<http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/>

NSPCC

0800 028 3550

FGM and Child Abuse Linked to Faith of Belief Helpline for professionals and teaching resources, safeguarding advice, training and consultancy for schools and colleges.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

Sharan Project

0844 504 3231

A national BAME specialist service for women at risk of being disowned due to Forced Marriage or Honour Based Abuse
<http://sharan.org.uk/> Lead partner for Our Girl – a national forced marriage prevention and awareness campaign.

www.ourgirl.co.uk

Karma Nirvana

0800 5999247

A helpline for anyone affected by Honour Based Abuse or Forced Marriage.

karmanirvana.org.uk

Children and Families Across Borders

0207 735 8941

Free advice on international child protection and international family cases. Provision of training and international casework services.

<http://cfab.org.uk/>