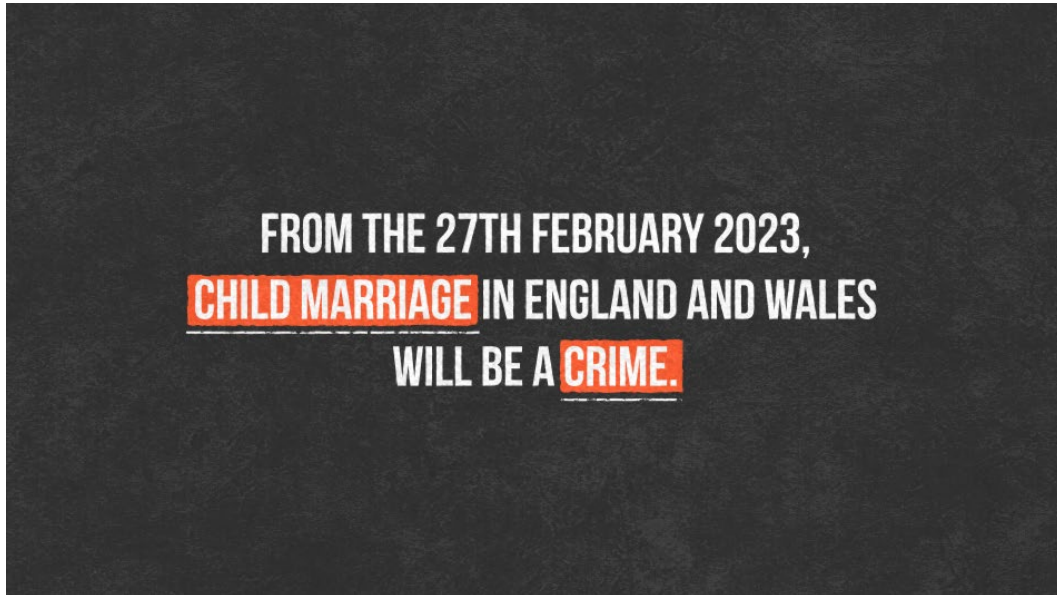




Press Release – Child Marriage Legislation Change on 27 Feb 2023



On the 27th February 2023 we hit a significant milestone on our journey towards ending child marriage. On this day, the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 comes into force, bringing us one step closer to ending child marriage for good.

The Act raises the age of marriage and civil partnership to 18 in England and Wales. This means that 16 to 17-year-olds will no longer be able to marry or enter into a civil partnership under any circumstances, including with parental or judicial consent.

The new law also expands the criminal offence of forced marriage to automatically recognise children, on account of their age, as victims of forced marriage. Children will no longer be required to prove they were coerced or pressured to marry. The new criminal offence captures all child marriages, including those that are not religious and/or not legally recognised.

Child marriage, though invisible, is a rife issue in Britain today. In many cases these marriages are never reported nor captured by statistics. Since 2017, our national Honour Based Abuse Helpline has responded to over 400 cases relating to child marriage. We've produced an extensive report on the issue available [here](#).



With the legislation coming into effect, we are keen to drive as much awareness and education on the issues, ensuring that everyone is aware of the changes in the law, and how best to protect children at risk.

Press Support to Raise Awareness

We would like to cover this story throughout the UK and can provide local and regional data and insights to support reporting.

In addition to being able to provide statistics backed by the ONS, and soundbites/quotes by our leadership team we can also provide a range of different survivor case studies to highlight the tragic human impact of child marriage taking place in the UK, such as [Farhana's Story](#) and a number of [Child Marriage stories](#).

On the 27th February at 2:00pm, Karma Nirvana will be hosting a parliamentary 'drop in' event with Pauline Latham MP and Karma Nirvana Child Marriage Survivors. MP's and peers will be attending this event to show their support. Karma Nirvana will be tweeting live from this event.

We will also be releasing a **short animation** on the new legislation which will be available on our website and [YouTube Channel](#).

We remain available to support with further information as you may require to cover this event.

A Karma Nirvana representative is available for interview.

For further information or to request an interview please contact:

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Campaign hashtags include: *#ChildMarriage #HonourBasedAbuse*

Facebook: [KarmaNirvanaUK](#)

Twitter: [@KNFMHBV](#)

Instagram: [@knfmhbv](#)



Notes to the editor:

- Established in 1993, [Karma Nirvana](#) is a leading charity working towards changing attitudes and increasing protection for victims of Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage.
- Karma Nirvana operate the only national helpline for victims of Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage: 0800 5999 247
- [Karma Nirvana's social media assets](#)

Karma Nirvana Helpline Statistics and Insights, 2020–2022

- We supported 177 children at risk of forced marriage on our helpline.
- 51% of the children supported were to be taken abroad – 90 cases
- 76 of children were aged 16 & 17 years old, the youngest known was 11.
- 60 victims cited both their parents as perpetrating child marriage.
- 66 cases referred by Children's social care to the helpline.
- The most cited triggers for child marriage were a history of HBA & saying no to the marriage.