



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Briefing Sheet

Sept 2015

What is FGM?

Female Genital Mutilation, (FGM), refers to procedures that intentionally alter, mutilate, remove or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. FGM is medically unnecessary and can have serious health consequences, both at the time it is carried out and in later life. It is usually carried out on girls before they reach puberty, but in some cases it is performed on new-born infants or on women before marriage or pregnancy. It is often justified by the belief that it is beneficial for the girl or woman, but FGM is an extremely harmful practice which violates basic human rights.

What are indicators of FGM?

The most significant risk factor for girls and young women is coming from a community where FGM is known to be practised and/or where a mother, sister or other female family member has been subjected to FGM.

Indicators may include:

Preparations for the student to take a long holiday - arranging vaccinations or planning an absence from school.

A change in the child's behaviour after a prolonged absence from school, including; being withdrawn; crying or being away from class for long periods; and/ or the child has bladder or menstrual problems, and/ or may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing.

What do I need to do if I am worried?

All staff should be aware of and consider potential indicators that FGM may be, or has already taken place. Concerns should be detailed on a cause for concern form and passed immediately to a Child Protection Designated member of staff in school.

Designated staff are-

Kirsten Finley and Debbie Martin

NB

From 1st October 2015 there is a statutory duty upon teachers, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils. Cases reported to Designated staff will be reported to Children's Social Care and the Police notified.