



Safeguarding Newsletter



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting'. **FGM** is a form of child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence in the UK.

FGM is carried out for a number of cultural, religious and social reasons. Some families and communities believe that FGM will benefit the girl in some way, such as preparing them for marriage or childbirth. The origins of FGM stem from Africa, Indonesia and the Middle East. FGM is a harmful practice that isn't required by any religion and there are no health benefits of FGM.

The prevalence of FGM

Latest figures show that calls to the NSPCC FGM helpline have risen by 36%, from 476 in 2017/18 to 645 last year. A 2015 study estimated that 137,000 women in England and Wales are living with the consequences of FGM. Between April and June in 2015, there were 1,036 newly recorded cases in England. Internationally, UNICEF estimates that over 200 million girls and women worldwide have been subjected to FGM.



Indicators of risk

- If the family originates from a community where FGM is practiced. The Home Office has identified girls and women from certain communities as being more at risk: Somalian, Kenyan, Ethiopian, Sierra Leonean, Sudanese, Egyptian, Nigerian, Eritrean, Yemeni, Kurdish and Indonesian.
- If the family intends to travel to that country of origin for a holiday/extended break
- A parent seeks to withdraw their child from learning about FGM in school
- A child expresses anxiety about attending a traditional ceremony or custom. If you suspect a child is going on holiday or being withdrawn from school for the purpose of FGM, inform the DSL and contact the police.

If a child talks to you about FGM it's important to:

- Listen carefully to what they're saying, let them know they've done the right thing by telling you.
- Tell them it's not their fault and that you'll take them seriously.
- Explain what you'll do next and report what the child has told you as soon as possible.

If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police. Please do this with either the Headteacher and/or Designated Safeguarding