

*Vision: Isaiah 49:16 "I have written your name on the palms of my hands"
Actively learning together in a safe, happy environment shaped by the certainty that
each individual is known and loved by God.*

Fairford C of E Primary School



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Policy

**FAIRFORD C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL
FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION POLICY**

1. Vision and Values

Our school vision is: *Isaiah 49:16 "I have written your name on the palms of my hands"*

Actively learning together in a safe, happy environment shaped by the certainty that each individual is known and loved by God

At Fairford Primary School we have chosen those values that best reflect our thoughts as a school and community

Perseverance

Friendship

Respect

Forgiveness

Trust

Thankfulness

2. Rationale

2.1 Fairford C of E Primary School Primary School has robust and rigorous safeguarding procedures and practices and takes its responsibilities for child protection seriously. This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Government's *Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation* and the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*.

2.2 Female Genital Mutilation is a form of child abuse and as such, is dealt with under the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. At Fairford Primary School, the Head Teacher and Governors expect safeguarding to be everybody's responsibility and expect all staff to adhere to and follow this policy and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2.3 The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as amended, makes the practice of female genital mutilation illegal.

3. Definition of FGM

3.1 Female Genital Mutilation is defined as follows for the purposes of this policy:

"Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons." (joint statement of the World Health Organisation, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and the United Nations Population Fund - 1997).

3.2. The school has taken information from several sources in order to prepare this policy including the Government's *Multi- agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation* and NSPCC Guidance.

3.3 The UK Government's *Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation* states:

- "FGM is a criminal offence - it is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls and therefore should be treated as such." (paragraph 1.4)
- "FGM is a deeply rooted practice, widely carried out among specific ethnic populations in Africa and parts of the Middle East and Asia." (paragraph 2.3)

3.4 From 31 October 2015 onwards, regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales have a mandatory obligation to report visually confirmed or verbally disclosed cases of FGM in girls under 18 to the police.

4. The School's Policy

4.1. In light of this information, Fairford C of E Primary School has decided to take proactive action to protect and prevent our girls being forced to undergo FGM. The Head Teacher and Governors do this in four ways:

1. a robust Attendance Policy that does not authorise holidays, extended or otherwise;
2. FGM training for the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and disseminated training for all staff at the front line dealing with the children (all our staff are safeguarding trained);
3. FGM discussions by the DSL with parents of children from practising communities who are at risk; and
4. comprehensive PSHE and Relationship and Sex Education delivered to children with a discussion about FGM.

4.2 In order to protect our children, it is important that key information is known by all of the school community. Indications that FGM has taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing;
- prolonged absences from school;
- spending long periods away from the classroom with urinary or menstrual problems;
- reluctance to undergo medical examinations;
- noticeable changes in behaviour – FGM can result in post-traumatic stress;
- soreness, infection or unusual presentation when a nappy is changed; and
- asking for help but not being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

4.3 Indications that a child is at risk of FGM include, but are not limited to:

- the family coming from a community known to practice FGM - especially if there are strong levels of influence held by elders and /or elders are involved in bringing up female children;
- in conversation a child talking about FGM;
- parents seeking to withdraw their children from learning about FGM;
- a child may talk about or express anxiety about a special ceremony;
- a child may talk or have anxieties about forthcoming holidays to their country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent;

- the girl or family has a limited level of integration within the UK community;
- the parent/guardian requests permission for authorised absence for a prolonged period of overseas travel or you are aware that absence is required for vaccinations.

If any risk factor is identified in respect of a child, the staff member concerned must consult the DSL to determine whether the level of risk requires referral at that time to Social Care.

4.4 If a woman has already undergone FGM and it comes to the attention of any professional, the DSL should be immediately informed and consideration given to any child protection implications; for example, for younger siblings or extended family members and, if appropriate, a referral made to Social Care or the Police.

5. Recording

- All interventions should be accurately recorded.
- Call police on 101 if you have information about FGM but, except in an emergency, consult the DSL before you do so. In an emergency, dial 999.

6. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

You can find the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on the school website.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and whenever the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed.