

To All Education and Training Providers

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SKILLS

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Please ask for: Lorraine Lord

Your Ref:

Our Ref: LL/KES

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Dear Headteacher/Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Female Genital Mutilation

I am writing to raise your awareness of the new mandatory duty to report Female Genital Mutilation. In order to be in a position to comply with this duty, it is important that all school staff have an awareness and understanding of Female Genital Mutilation.

Teachers, along with health and social care professionals, are required under a new mandatory duty in the Serious Crime Act (2015), to report any cases of known Female Genital Mutilation disclosed by anyone under the age of 18 yrs to the police.

Where Female Genital Mutilation is **known** either through **disclosure** or the **observation** of physical signs (through normal day to day practice e.g. nappy changing, personal care etc., school staff should:-

- follow their school's child protection policy and report any case of **known** Female Genital Mutilation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, ensuring a written record of the concern or disclosure.
- the teacher should immediately make a report to the police (orally or in writing – recommended route: call 101) providing the following information:-
 1. explain that you are making a report under the FGM mandatory reporting duty
 2. your details:
 - name
 - contact details (work telephone number and e-mail address) and times when you will be available to be called back
 - role
 - place of work
 3. details of your organisation's designated safeguarding lead:
 - name
 - contact details (work telephone number and e-mail address)
 - place of work

4. the girl's details:
 - name
 - age/date of birth
 - address

- the report should be logged by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on the school child protection file or record, ensuring police notification is logged including the case reference number.

Where FGM is **suspected** or recognised as a **risk**, school staff should:

- follow their school's child protection policy and report any case of known Female Genital Mutilation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, ensuring a written record of the concern or disclosure.
- refer the case to the Solihull Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The referral should be of good quality clearly stating all known facts. All Female Genital Mutilation cases entering MASH go straight to a strategy discussion, police are informed as part of the multi-agency discussion who update their information and investigate as appropriate.

The attached factsheet provides a useful summary of the duty to report.

Further information including frequently asked questions, can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information> . Please brief staff on the contents. The guidance document covers:-

- What is the definition of "known,"
- To whom does the duty apply
- Who do they contact
- Contact with parents
- Timeframes and recording
- Responding to suspicion of FGM
- Consequences of failing to meet the duty to report

It is advisable that schools keep records of how they have advised all staff of their responsibilities and how each member of teaching staff knows and understands their professional responsibility, by signing a declaration that they have read and understood the mandatory duty to report known cases of Female Genital Mutilation. We recommend that this is recorded in your safeguarding training log.

Further information and signposting about Female Genital Mutilation can be found within the attached pathway for FGM taken from the Designated Safeguarding Leads Handbook.

Yours sincerely



Heather Loveridge
Interim Assistant Director
Education & Skills Division