

OASIS ACADEMY PARKWOOD



FGM Policy January 2016



Rationale: At Oasis Academy Parkwood, we take our responsibility for child protection seriously.

In order to do this, we have rigorous and robust safeguarding procedures in place to protect the children in our care.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs.

FGM is illegal in the UK and mandatory reporting to the Police commenced in October 2015.

FGM is classified as a form of child abuse for girls under 18 years old, with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Girls who are threatened with, or who have undergone FGM may withdraw from education, restricting their educational and personal development.

They may feel unable to go against the wishes of their parents and consequently may suffer emotionally as well as physically.

Keeping our children safe is the responsibility of everyone.

Procedures:

We will ensure our children are kept safe from the threat of FGM by:

- Ensuring there is a vigorous attendance policy in place that does not authorise any holidays during term time.
- Being alert to pupils who may be at risk
- Ensuring that designated staff undertake FGM training and disseminate the training to all staff within the school.

Indicators:

You may become aware of a pupil because:

- She appears anxious, depressed and withdrawn
- Her educational performance, aspirations or motivation may decline
- She absents herself from lessons, possibly spending prolonged periods in the bathroom
- Her friends report their concerns

Girls may be most at risk during the summer holiday, so staff may wish to pay particular attention in the summer term, and when girls return to school or college in the autumn.

Key indicators that FGM has taken place:

If FGM is believed to have taken place, it is important that this is reported to the designated safeguarding lead/deputy as a matter of Child Protection. The child may require medical attention and it is important that each case is dealt with in a sensitive manner and on an individual basis.

There are a number of indications that a child has already been subjected to FGM:

- The child may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- A girl may spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- A girl may spend long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from school. When the child returns, there are noticeable behaviour changes (withdrawn or depression).

Action:

- If staff are concerned that a pupil is at immediate risk of, or has undergone FGM, they must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Tracey Norriss, or Deputy, Mrs Jackie Mell immediately.

The DSL/D must:

- Make an immediate referral into Children's Social Care for further investigation alongside the Police and health services
- Talk to the student about why they have made a referral (particularly if against their wishes)

Staff should not:

- Examine a student (unless part of their normal personal care, e.g. nappy-changing, disability care etc.)
- Treat such concerns as a 'domestic' issue
- Ignore what the student has told them or dismiss the need for immediate protection
- Decide that it is not their responsibility to follow up the allegation
- Discuss their concerns with the student's family or community, in advance of any enquiries by the police, adult or children's social care

In all situations the girl should be offered support and medical help, and assess other related females who may be at risk.

If a child discloses information regarding FGM:

- We will ensure that a female professional is available to speak with her
- We will make no assumptions

- Give her time to talk and be willing to listen
- Be sensitive to the intimate nature of the subject
- be sensitive to the fact that the individual may be loyal to their parents
- Be non-judgemental (pointing out the illegality and health risks of the practice, but not blaming the girl or woman)
- Get accurate information about the urgency of the situation if the individual is at risk of being subjected to the procedure
- Take detailed notes

Reporting:

All disclosures should be recorded accurately, and should be a true reflection of what has been said. All disclosures of FGM, will be reported to North Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board.

