

Our Lady Queen of Peace RCVA Primary School

In our school we believe that each person is unique and created to flourish in God's image. We aspire to excellence through a nurturing environment in which every child takes Jesus Christ as their model and develops their individual gifts so that they live fully and serve others.



Female Genital Mutilation Policy

Agreed:

Date: 5.6.19

Review Date: Summer Term 2021

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J.M. D.' or similar, is written over the 'Agreed:' text.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

Rationale

Our Lady Queen of Peace RCVA Primary School has robust and rigorous safeguarding procedures and practices and takes its responsibilities of child protection seriously.

Female Genital Mutilation is a form of child abuse and as such, is dealt with under the schools Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy. The Head Teacher and Governors expect Safeguarding to be everybody's responsibility and expect all staff to adhere to and follow these policies.

Definition of Female Genital Mutilation, (FGM)

The school uses the World Health Organisation definition:

"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." (World Health Organisation-1997)

The UK Government has written advice and guidance on FGM that states:

FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. In all circumstances where FGM is practised on a child it is a violation of the child's right to life, their right to their bodily integrity, as well as their right to health.

The UK Government has signed a number of international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Girls are at particular risk of FGM during school summer holidays. This is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that they may be at risk of undergoing FGM. UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians and Eritreans. However women from non-African communities who are at risk of FGM include Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani women.

Teachers in England and Wales have a mandatory requirement to report visually confirmed or verbally disclosed cases of FGM in girls under 18 to the police.

(https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/469448/FGM-Mandatory-Reportingprocedural-info-FINAL.pdf)

In light of this information Our Lady Queen of Peace RCVA Primary School has decided to take proactive action to protect and prevent our girls being forced to undertake FGM.

The Head Teacher and Governors do this in 4 ways:

1. A robust Attendance Policy that does not authorise holidays, extended or otherwise.
2. FGM training for Designated Safeguarding Leads and disseminated training for all staff
3. When relevant, FGM discussions by Designated Safeguarding Lead with parents of children from practising communities who are at risk.
4. Comprehensive PSHE and Relationship and Sex Education

Indications that FGM has taken place:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Prolonged absences from school
- Spending long periods away from the classroom/office with urinary or menstrual problems
- Reluctant 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

- Asking for help but not being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

Indications that a child is at risk of FGM:

- The family comes from a community known to practice FGM - especially if there are elderly women present.
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM.
- Parents seeking to withdraw their children from learning about FGM.
- A child may express anxiety about a special ceremony.
- The child may talk or have anxieties about forthcoming holidays to their country of origin.
- Parent/Guardian requests permission for authorised absence for overseas travel or you are aware that absence is required for vaccinations.

If a female has already undergone FGM and it comes to the attention of any professional, consideration needs to be given to any Child Protection implications e.g. for younger siblings, extended family members and a referral made to Social Care or the Police.

Records

All interventions will be accurately recorded on CPOMS and the police will be called.

Call police on 101 if you have information about FGM. In an emergency, dial 999.

Equality statement

- The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.
- This policy has been impact assessed by governors in order to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality.

[UNICEF: Rights of the Child](#)

[Article 3](#)

The best interests of the child must be top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

[UNICEF: Rights of the Child](#)

[Article 5](#)

The rights and responsibilities of parents to guide and direct their children as they grow up are respected.

[UNICEF: Rights of the Child](#)

[Article 14](#)

Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping others from practising their rights.

[UNICEF: Rights of the Child](#)

[Article 18](#)

Both parents share the responsibility to bring up their child and should also consider what is best for the child.

UNICEF: Rights of the Child

Article 19

Every child has the right to be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment.

UNICEF: Rights of the Child

Article 24

Every child has the right to the best possible health.

UNICEF: Rights of the Child

Article 34

Every child has the right to be protected from sexual abuse and exploitation.

UNICEF: Rights of the Child

Article 37

Children should not be subject to cruel or degrading treatment or punishment.

UNICEF: Rights of the Child

Article 39

Children who experience neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.