

# Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

*Educational establishments should aim to create an 'open environment' where pupils feel comfortable to discuss the problems that they are facing – an environment where FGM can be discussed openly and support and counselling are provided routinely. Pupils need to know that they will be listened to and their concerns taken seriously." Multi-Agency Guidelines on Female Genital Mutilation.*

*Government statutory guidance on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) makes it **compulsory** for secondary schools to teach pupils about FGM and other harmful practices, including forced marriage and honour based abuse. Although the duty to teach about FGM is not mandatory for primary schools, it can be optionally applied.' Female Genital Multiplication: Guidance for schools, June 2019*

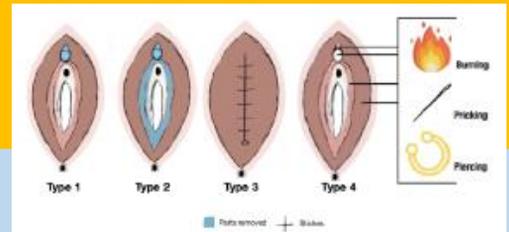
*...we encourage all schools to teach about the topic from the earliest opportunity in key stage 1 identify and protect girls at risk earlier, and empower the next generation to speak out about the issue.'*  
**National FGM Centre**

## WHAT IS IT?

- FGM is a practice that involves partial or total removal or injury of the girl or a woman's external genitals
- FGM is sometimes called Female Genital Cutting (FGC) or female circumcisions or excision. However, many communities also use local terms to refer to the practice e.g. 'Tahoor', 'Sunna', 'Gudiniin', 'Halalays' and 'Bondo'
- There are different types of FGM, based on the extent of the cut made. This includes Type 1, Type 2, Type 3 or Type 4. The type practiced differs from community to community and can depend on a community's tradition and reason for the practice.

### Health Complications of FGM

- Possible health complications of FGM include:
  - Loss of blood
  - Pain or shock
  - Difficulties in passing urine
  - Difficulties with menstruation
  - Increased risk of recurrent urinary tract infections
  - Complications in pregnancy or childbirth
  - Psychological difficulties
- It is important to note that not all girls who have undergone FGM experience health problems and some may not be aware of these problems or may not relate them to FGM.



## WHO IS AT RISK?

- FGM can take place when a girl is still a baby, during childbirth, adolescence or at the time of marriage
- FGM is practiced in at least 28 countries in Africa, parts of the Middle East and South East Asia
- It is estimated that 24,000 girls in the UK are at risk of the most severe form of FGM

## WHY IS FGM PRACTICED?

- Many reasons have been given for the practice of FGM, including:
  - Protective tradition and religion
  - Improve hygiene and cleanliness
  - Improving a girls' marriage prospects
  - Promoting cultural identity
  - Increasing fertility
  - Rite of Passage into womanhood
- There is often more than one reason given by communities for FGM. The majority of these reasons are based on myth and misinformation.
- As FGM is a social norm and communities believe there are perceived benefits, there is a lot of pressure on individuals to continue to practice FGM.

## FGM AND THE LAW

- FGM is illegal in the UK and is considered a form of child abuse.
- It is illegal to help, support or arrange for FGM to be performed on a girl in the UK
- It is also illegal to take a girl outside of the UK to have FGM carried out.

## KEY DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

- Female Genital Mutilation: Guidance for schools
- Forward Safeguarding rights and dignity
- Developing excellence in response to FGM and other harmful practices (National FGM Centre, and The Eve Appeal)
- [www.nationalfgmcentre.org.uk](http://www.nationalfgmcentre.org.uk)

## VOCABULARY AND COVERAGE

**KS1** – The following vocabulary will be introduced throughout the year in Y1 and Y2 in line with our RSE curriculum - *vagina, clitoris, penis, testicles, urine, faeces*. This is to ensure that children are comfortable talking about their body parts.

**UPPER KS2** – The following vocabulary will be introduced throughout the year in Y5 and Y6 in line with our RSE curriculum - *vulva, male genitalia, labia, urethra*

**YEAR 5** – Know Your Body, KS2 Introduction to FGM will be taught during the Summer Term. This is a teaching tool developed from the National FGM Centre and The Eve Appeal

## REPORTING CONCERNS

- Local Authority's Social Services
- FORWARD: 0208 960 4000; [support@forwarduk.org.uk](mailto:support@forwarduk.org.uk)
- NSPCC FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550 (24-hours); [fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk)