



St. Mary's Playgroup Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Policy

If a member of staff thinks that a child may be at risk of FGM or suspects that FGM has already occurred, they must seek help and advice – even if the FGM didn't happen recently.

If we think a child is in immediate danger we will contact the police.

If we are worried about a child but they are not in immediate danger, we will:

- Follow the St. Mary's Playgroup child protection procedures.
- Contact the FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550 or by emailing: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk.
- If needed we will apply for an FGM protection order. (Anyone can apply on Gov.uk if they are concerned that someone is at risk of FGM).

As our duty of care, we have a statutory obligation under national safeguarding protocols (Working Together to Safeguard Children) to protect young girls and women from FGM as it is an illegal, extremely harmful practise and a form of abuse.

If a child in our care shows signs and symptoms of FGM or we have good reason to suspect the child is at risk of FGM (either in the UK or to be take abroad for this purpose), we MUST refer the child using our existing standard safeguarding procedures as it is a form of child abuse. When a child is identified as "at risk" of FGM, this information MUST be brought to the child's GP attention and health visitor (as per section 47 of The Children's Act 1989)

Important Signs & Symptoms to look out for if you suspect the child is "at risk" of FGM

- Father comes from a community that is known to practice FGM
- Mother/Family may have limited contact with people outside family
- It is known that the mother has FGM
- Family does not engage with professionals (health, school, other)
- Parents say that they or a relative will take the child abroad for a prolonged period of time
- Child has spoken about a holiday to her country of origin or another where the procedure is practiced
- Child has confided that she is to have a "special procedure" to "become a woman" or to be "more like her mum/sister/aunt" etc
- Family/child are already know to social services

Important Signs & Symptoms to look out for if you suspect the child has had FGM

- Child regularly attends GP appointments, has frequent Urinary Tract Infections (UTI'S)
- Increased emotional and physiological needs e.g withdrawals, depression or significant changes in behaviour.
- Child talks about pain/discomfort between legs
- Child has difficulty walking, sitting for long periods of time- which wasn't a problem previously

Significant or Immediate Risk

- Child confides in a member of staff/professional that FGM has taken place
- Parent or family member discloses professional/ nursery child has had FGM

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