

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is any procedure which involves the partial or complete removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for no medical reason. Many believe that FGM is necessary to ensure acceptance by their community, however this custom is against the law in the UK and many other countries.

All types of FGM are illegal in the UK; it is an offence to take a female out of the UK for FGM or for anyone to circumcise women or children for cultural or non-medical reasons here in the UK.

Warning signs of Girls at Risk

Member of a community whose country of origin practises FGM and that is less integrated into UK society

A girl whose sister or other relatives have undergone FGM

A girl whose parents have withdrawn her from lessons featuring FGM (where other warning signs are also present)

Families making preparations for an extended holiday, including arranging vaccinations in the country of origin.

Families may practice FGM in the UK when a female family member elder is visiting from the country of origin.

You may hear reference to FGM in conversation, for example a girl may tell other children about it.

Female Genital Mutilation mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this directly to the police.