

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is:

- The partial or total removal of the external female genitalia – clitoris, labia minora, labia majora
- Injury to the female genital organs –piercing, pricking, cauterising.
- Narrowing of the vaginal opening through creation of a covering seal.
- Undertaken for non-medical reasons

FGM is a deeply embedded social norm, practised by families for a variety of complex reasons.

The practice is not required by any religion.

FGM is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls, including in international legislation such as the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW.

FGM is illegal in the UK under the Female Genital mutilation Act 2003 and the Serious Crime Act 2015. It is illegal to:

- Perform FGM in the UK
- Assist someone to perform FGM in the UK
- Assist someone to perform FGM on herself in the UK
- Assist someone to perform FGM on a UK national/permanent or habitual resident, outside of the UK

Please refer to the NFGMC Terminology Guide:

<https://nationalfgmcentre.or.uk> for further information and terminology.

Potential Risk Factors and Indicators:

There are a number of risk factors and indicators that FGM may have taken place or is about to take place. For example, possible risk factors could be that it is known that close female family members have undergone the procedure. Indicators that FGM may have taken place could be changes in the girl's behaviour. Given the complex nature of FGM, please read [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation \(Jul 2020\)](#) for more detail and context around identifying girls at risk of FGM or having had the procedure.

Staff should approach the issue with sensitivity and compassion. While FGM is more prevalent in particular countries (see figure 1), professionals should not assume that all women and girls from a particular community are supportive of, or at risk of FGM.

Information Sharing:

All services have a duty to act to identify potential risk of FGM and share information where appropriate. Schools may be invited to attend multi-agency strategy meetings where they have a female pupil on roll with a familial risk of FGM.

Health will share information with schools where a child is identified to be at risk of FGM. Schools do not need to act on this unless they have new concerns re: FGM. Note that parents may not be aware of this information sharing process.

FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty for Regulated Professionals (October 2015):

(Under Section 5B FGM Act 2003)

All Regulated Professionals must now report all known cases of FGM in under 18s to the police. Regulated professionals include teachers*

Known cases of FGM are:

- A disclosure by the victim that FGM has been performed on her at any point
- Visible signs that suggest that FGM has been performed on a girl

Mandatory reporting:

- Must be reported to the Police – ideally verbally via 101, or in writing
- Must identify the girl and give reason for mandatory reporting
- Should be completed as soon as possible, ideally by the close of the next working day.
- Should be recorded by the schools designated safeguarding lead within their usual safeguarding procedure
- Will receive a reporting reference number from the police
- Will be recorded alongside a child protection referral to Children's Social Care

Points to note:

- There are no circumstances where a teacher* should examine a girl's genitalia. A teacher* may see evidence of FGM if carrying out an agreed 'intimate care' procedure, e.g. assisting with toileting or changing a nappy.
- Only a disclosure from the victim herself requires mandatory reporting to the police. Notification by family or friends should be referred to Children's Social Care as "suspicion of FGM".

*(Persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work in schools and other institutions).

Useful Documents/Website

- FGM Resource Pack (Feb 2021)
- Home Office online FGM Training Module
- Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (Jul 2020)
- FGM schools Guidance National FGM Centre

[Schools Mandatory FGM Reporting Form \[LINK\]](#)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Guidance for Newcastle Schools

January 2026

Child Protection and FGM:

Identifying and safeguarding girls at risk of FGM poses a challenge since families may give no other cause for concern and girls may indicate no failure to thrive beforehand.

FGM is **always** child abuse and should be dealt with under Section 47 of the Children's Act, under local safeguarding procedures.

School designated safeguarding lead should:

Communicate sensitively with the girl/family and inform them of reporting if it is felt safe to do so. Report and record all FGM concerns in the usual way **but** must also record any 'known cases' for mandatory reporting to the Police.

Member of school staff concerned that an under 18 has had/is at risk of FGM

Where there is risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm, professionals should report the case **immediately** to the police, including **dialling 999** if appropriate.

Mandatory report when:

INFORMED by the girl that she has had FGM
OBSERVES physical signs which appear to show FGM has been carried out

SUSPECTS that FGM has been carried out

CONSIDERS girl may be **AT RISK** of FGM

Follow NSCP Safeguarding process

Mandatory reporting duty applies

Mandatory report:

- Ring 101 – Northumbria Police
- Report 'known case' as a regulated professional of FGM in accordance with Home Office Guidance
- Receive reference number from police
- Complete mandatory report form for school CP

Refer to IRS for child protection
0191 277 2500
IRSADMIN@newcastle.gov.uk

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE
REQUIRED re; victim and/or other children via police and social care

ASSESSMENT OF
CASE: Multiagency
safeguarding
meeting

Useful contacts:

Jenna Wilkinson, Access and Inclusion
Email: jenna.wilkinson@newcastle.gov.uk

NSPCC FGM Helpline
Mon to Fri 8am-10pm & Sat-Sun 9pm-6pm.
Tel: 0800 028 3550
Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Current Statics

For the most up to date statics, please refer to the following sites:

The National FGM Centre interactive map which has up-to-date global data:

<https://nationfgmcentre.org.uk/world-fgm-prevelance-map/>

NHS digital:

<https://files.digital.nhs.uk/73/515589/Female%20Genital%20Mutilation%20%28FGM%29%20-%20Summary%20-%20April%202023%20to%20March%202024.pdf>

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/female-genital-mutilation/april-2023-to-march-2024>