

*We honour God through our actions*



## Priory Catholic Primary School

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Policy document:	<b>FGM STATEMENT</b>
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Chair Signature:	

## FEMALE CIRCUMCISION & CUTTING

It has been estimated that over 20,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM in the UK each year, and that 66,000 women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a growing cause of concern in schools.

FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls, and therefore it is dealt with as part of existing child and adult safeguarding/protection structures, policies and procedures. It is illegal in the UK to subject a child to female genital mutilation (FGM) or to take a child abroad to undergo the procedure – Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Despite the harm it causes, FGM practising communities consider it normal to protect their cultural identity. The age at which girls are subject to FGM varies greatly from shortly after birth to any time up to adulthood. The average age is 10 to 12 years.

At Priory Catholic Primary School, our staff are trained in dealing with FGM and are alerted to the following key indicators:

- A child's family comes from a community that is known to practise FGM
- A child may talk about a long holiday to a country where the practice is prevalent
- A child may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion
- A child may request help from a teacher or another adult
- A child who has difficulty sitting down
- A child who needs to visit the toilet frequently
- A child who is withdrawn

Any female child born to a woman or has a sister who has been subjected to FGM will be considered to be at risk, as much as other female children in the extended family. Any information or concern that a child is at risk of or has undergone FGM will result in a child protection referral to Children's Social Care.

The FGM mandatory reporting duty is a legal duty provided for in the FGM Act 2003 (as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015). The legislation requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either: · are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or · observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth (see section 2.1a for further information). For the purposes of the duty, the relevant age is the girl's age at the time of the disclosure/identification of FGM (i.e. it does not apply where a woman aged 18 or over discloses she had FGM when she was under 18).

**Call the FGM helpline if you are worried a child is at risk of, or has had, FGM. It's free, anonymous and they are available 24/7. Call them on 0800 028 3550, or email them at [fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk)**

Information for children can be found here: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/abuse-safety/female-circumcision-fgm-cutting/>