

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Policy

November 2019

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Signed (chair): D Whinham | Name: | Date: |
| Signed (Head): A Hodge | Name: | Date: |
| Reviewed by: A Hodge | Reviewed on: | Note of Revisions: |
| Ratified by: Governing Body on | | Next Review: November 2021 |

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

| | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------|--|
| Policies, Procedures or Practices | | Date | |
| EIA CARRIED OUT BY: | | EIA APPROVED BY: | |

Groups that may be affected:

| Are there any concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes) | Existing or potential adverse impact | Existing or potential for positive impact |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Age (young people, the elderly: issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion) | | |
| Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication). | | |
| Gender Reassignment (transsexual) | | |
| Marriage and civil partnership | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | | |
| Racial Groups (consider: language, culture, ethnicity including gypsy/traveller groups and asylum seekers) | | |
| Religion or belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief) | | |
| Gender (male, female) | | |
| Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual; actual or perceived) | | |

Any adverse impacts are explored in a Full Impact Assessment.

Rationale

Bromley Heath Junior School has robust and rigorous safeguarding procedures and takes its responsibilities of child protection seriously. Female Genital Mutilation is a form of child abuse and as such is dealt with under the school's Safeguarding policy.

At Bromley Heath Junior School, the Headteacher and Governors expect Safeguarding to be everybody's responsibility and adhere to and follow these policies. The school uses the World Health Organisation definition as written below.

Definition of FGM

"Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons." (World Health Organisation-1997)

Government Documents

The school has taken information from several documents to write this policy. These include, The South West Child Protection Procedures Guidelines for FGM www.swcpp.org.uk, the Government Home Office guidelines and the Ofsted guidelines for "Inspecting Safeguarding".

The UK Government has written advice and guidance on FGM that states;

"FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. In all circumstances where FGM is practised on a child it is a violation of the child's right to life, their right to their bodily integrity, as well as their right to health. The UK Government has signed a number of international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

"Girls are at particular risk of FGM during school summer holidays. This is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that they may be at risk of undergoing FGM. UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians and Eritreans. However, women from non-African communities that are at risk of FGM include Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani women."

Procedures

Bromley Heath Junior School has decided to take proactive action to protect and prevent our girls being forced to undertake FGM. The Headteacher and Governors do this in 3 ways:

1. A robust attendance policy that does not authorise holidays, extended or otherwise.
2. FGM training for Child Protection leads and disseminated training for all

3. FGM discussions by Child Protection lead with parents of children from practising communities who are at risk.

In order to protect our children, it is important that key information is known by all of the school community.

A child who has undergone FGM should be seen as a child protection issue.

Indications that FGM has taken place:

- Prolonged absence from school with noticeable behaviour change – especially after a return from holiday.
- Spend long periods of time away from the class during the day.
- A child may demonstrate signs of distress

Indications that a child is at risk of FGM:

- The family comes from a community that is known to practice FGM - especially if there are elderly women present.
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM.
- A child may express anxiety about a special ceremony.
- The child may talk or have anxieties about forthcoming holidays to their country of origin.
- Parent/Guardian requests permission for authorised absence for overseas travel or you are aware that absence is required for vaccinations.
- If a woman has already undergone FGM – and it comes to the attention of any professional, consideration needs to be given to any Child Protection implications e.g. for younger siblings, extended family members and a referral made to Social Care or the Police if appropriate.

If we have concerns that children in our school community are at risk or victims of Female Genital Mutilation, then we refer to the South West Child Protection Procedures Guidelines for FGM (www.swcpp.org.uk). We may speak to the child or family about these concerns.

Case should be dealt with sensitively, individually and independently. Using this guidance is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Record

All discussions and subsequent actions should be accurately recorded on the Child Protection log.

Refer

If a staff member, in the course of their professional duty, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the staff member must report it to the police on 101 or in an emergency 999.

Useful documents include:

- Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation www.gov.uk (2018)
- South West Child Protection Procedure Guidelines
<https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/southglos/contents.html>
- Working together to safeguard children, www.gov.uk (2018)
- Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education, DfE (2012)