

# Amplified Arts Academy FGM Guidance Policy

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Last updated: 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## Definitions and Background

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. Most affected women live in 28 African countries, as well as parts of the Middle East and Asia. Whilst FGM is usually performed on pre-pubertal girls, infants and adult women are also known to be targeted. As a result of increased international migration, FGM has also become a concern in countries like the UK: data from 2001 indicates that 66,000 women may have undergone FGM in England and Wales.

FGM is not a religious issue but an issue which “reflects a deep-rooted inequality between the sexes” according to the World Health Organisation. In rare cases, parents in the UK may find themselves under pressure from family members or the wider community to put their children through FGM. Despite prevention efforts in countries where FGM is more prevalent, FGM can be used within UK migrant communities to curb sexuality and preserve cultural identity.

There are four different types of FGM:

Type 1: Prepuce removal only or partial or total removal of the clitoris (clitoridectomy)

Type 2: Removal of the clitoris plus part or all of the labia minora (excision)

Type 3: Removal of part or all of the labia minora with the labia majora either being sewn together covering the urethra and vagina leaving only a small opening for urine and menstrual fluid (infibulation)

Type 4: Other: all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g. pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterising the genital area

## Legal Requirements

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 (and as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women.

Section 5B of the 2003 Act<sup>1</sup> introduces a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report ‘known’ cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police.

‘Known’ cases are those where either a girl informs the person that an act of FGM – however described – has been carried out on her, or where the person observes physical signs on a girl appearing to show that an act of FGM has been carried out and the person has no reason to believe that the act was, or was part of, a surgical operation within section 1(2)(a) or (b) of the FGM Act 2003 - i.e.. 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

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birth. 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).

## Raising Awareness

It is good practice to raise awareness within the organisation about the issues surrounding FGM. FGM is covered in our annual safeguarding session and our bi-annual safeguarding training certificate.

## Identifying women/children affected

If there is any concern that a child is at immediate risk of FGM or has had FGM, a referral must be made to social services or the police. Information that can help staff identify children or young people at risk of FGM:

- FGM is carried out on girls aged between 4 and 12 years
- FGM is often carried out by an elder woman in the community using a non-sterile instrument without anaesthetic
- Children and young people based in the UK may be taken abroad for the procedure
- There are believed to be practitioners carrying out FGM procedures based in the UK

## Reporting FGM

A person under the age of 18 is considered a child for the purposes of FGM and any cases or suspected cases must be reported.

If a member of staff suspects someone has experienced FGM or is at risk of undergoing FGM they have to raise this concern with the Safeguarding Officer who will take the following action:

- Call the police force on 101, the single non-emergency number. (Dial 999 if at immediate risk.)
- The call handler will log the call and refer it to the relevant team within the force, who will call you back to ask for additional information and discuss the case in more detail.

Be prepared to provide the call handler with the following information:

- Explain that you are making a report under the FGM mandatory reporting duty
- Your details
- Details of your organisation's designated safeguarding lead (name, telephone number and email)
- The child's details

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- If applicable, that you have undertaken, or will undertake, safeguarding actions, as required by the English or Welsh version of Working Together to Safeguard Children as appropriate.

Make a note of the reference number for the call and document it in the records. Ensure practice-safeguarding procedures for children are followed.

Ensure records are up to date and the designated safeguarding lead is kept updated as appropriate. Throughout the process, keep a comprehensive record of any discussions held and subsequent decisions made, in line with standard safeguarding practice. This will include:

- The circumstances surrounding the initial identification or disclosure of FGM
- Details of any safeguarding actions which were taken
- When and how you reported the case to the police (including the case reference number).

While the requirement to notify the police of this information is mandatory and overrides any restriction on disclosure which might otherwise apply, in handling and sharing information in all other contexts you should continue to have regard to relevant legislation and guidance, including the Data Protection Act 1998 and any guidance for your profession. The provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 do not prevent a mandatory report to the police from being made.

## Contacts

On-site AMP safeguarding lead: [Julia.davies@amplifiedartsacademy.com](mailto:Julia.davies@amplifiedartsacademy.com)

### Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers

Ray Newton (Legal Counsel) [ray.newton@hillsong.co.uk](mailto:ray.newton@hillsong.co.uk)

Ralph Boer [ralph.boer@hillsong.co.uk](mailto:ralph.boer@hillsong.co.uk)

Julie Galanti [julie.galanti@hillsong.co.uk](mailto:julie.galanti@hillsong.co.uk)

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